ROCK CANDY

FOR THOSE WHO WERE RAISED ON ROCK

October - November 2019

HUMBLE PIE · AXE · ENUFF Z'NUFF · SLADE · ADRIAN VANDENBERG · 'FAKEWOOD MAC' · W.A.S.P.

CRIMSON GLORY · LIVING COLOUR · LITA FORD · POISON · MANOWAR · OZZ · SHY

KIP WINGER
Q&A

TED NUGENT
'DOUBLE LIVE GONZO!' REVISITED

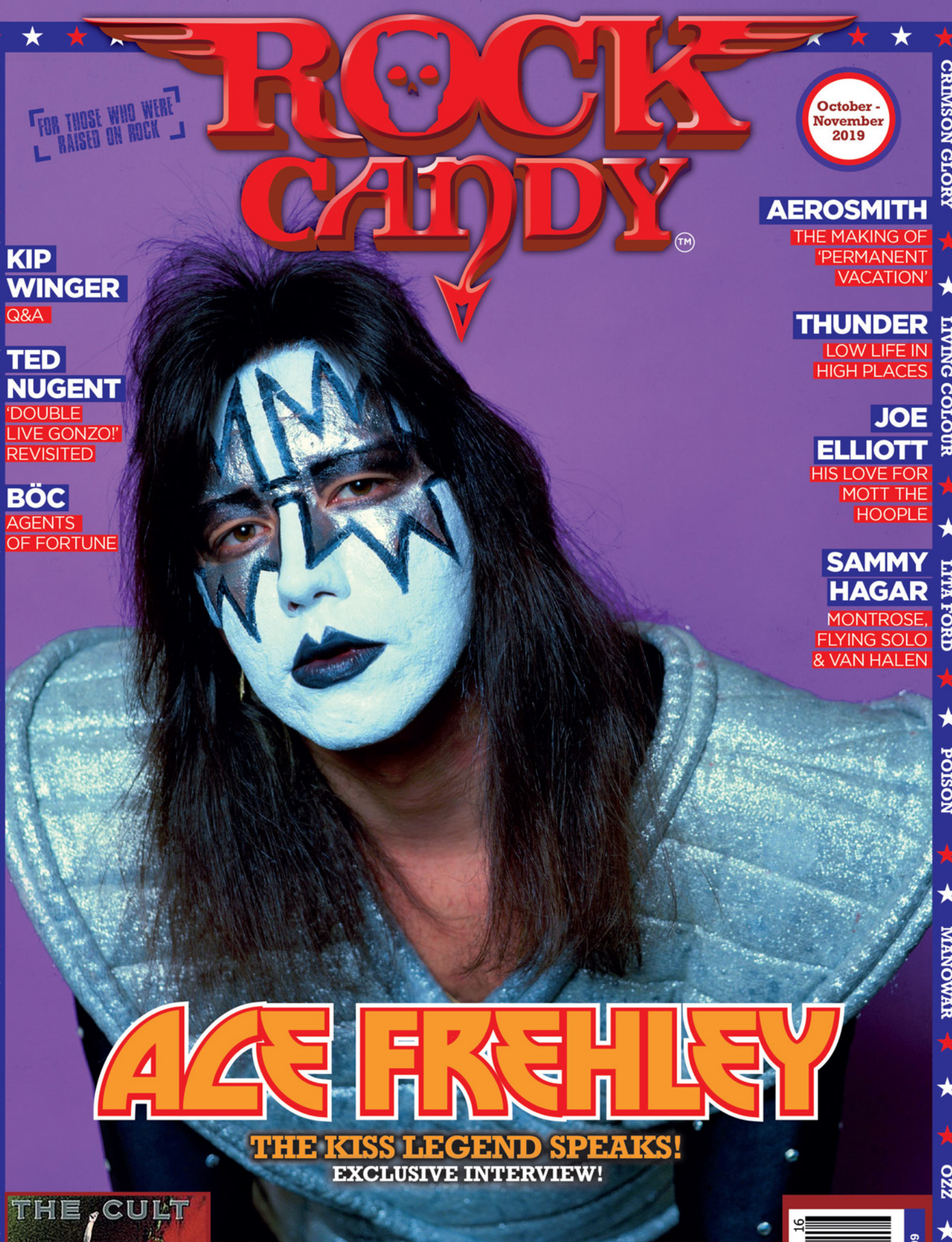
BÖC
AGENTS OF FORTUNE

AEROSMITH
THE MAKING OF 'PERMANENT VACATION'

THUNDER
LOW LIFE IN HIGH PLACES

JOE ELLIOTT
HIS LOVE FOR MOTT THE HOOPLE

SAMMY HAGAR
MONTROSE, FLYING SOLO & VAN HALEN



ACE FREHLEY

THE KISS LEGEND SPEAKS!

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW!

THE CULT ON 'SONIC TEMPLE'

"IT WAS BIG FAT GROOVES, ALL HEAVY AND DARK"

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WELCOME

I MADE IT MY business to attend a few festivals this summer, events where you can see a number of acts you wouldn't necessarily make a concerted effort to catch on their own. At Ramblin' Man I managed to see a few that blew my socks off. Beth Hart had been on the periphery of my radar, but I'd never heard any of her music before. To say I was gobsmacked would be an understatement. Here's an artist on a mission from God, a veritable firecracker. Her explosive concoction of rock, soul and aching ballads blew mine and everybody else's mind. Pity she wasn't on the main stage. Elsewhere, Cheap Trick and Foreigner delivered big time as did Jimmy Barnes, the only man who could convincingly replace Brian Johnson in AC/DC should the position become available. I was also really impressed by guitarist Kenny Wayne Shepherd's electrifying performance. His playing was off the hook, like a wild mash-up of Stevie Ray Vaughan and Johnny Winter.

Getting mellow for a moment, I witnessed some great Woodstock-style vibes at the Wickham Festival, most notably Matthews Southern Comfort and a fine solo set from Graham Nash. Then it was a hop, skip and a jump to a brilliant festival I'd never really paid any attention to before. A New Day is held in the beautiful Mount Ephraim Gardens in Faversham, Kent. Apparently it was started a few years ago as a sort of Jethro Tull-linked event, but has now grown into a fully formed three-day classic rock festival complete with two stages like those vintage '70s and '80s Reading extravaganzas. When one band is on, the other stage is being prepared for the next act so the music just keeps coming. The two acts that blew me away were Glenn Hughes and Band Of Friends.

Glenn played an entire set of classic Deep Purple material. The show was a huge triumph and the large crowd lapped the set up. Glenn, long-haired and trim, looked shockingly youthful and his band delivered every nuance of Purple's style perfectly. The current version of DP won't play a lot of their historic catalogue, so thank God we still have Glenn, who's ready and able to present the music both authentically and with turbo-charged energy.

Finally, Band of Friends is led by bassist Gerry McAvoy who was, of course, Rory Gallagher's long-time right-hand man. The show is a tribute to Rory, and Gerry's recruited an amazing guitarist/singer, Marcel Scherpenzeel. Close your eyes and you'd swear Rory was alive and well, singing and playing his heart out. Marcel offers an amazing facsimile of Rory and the set features classic songs. Gerry, of course, gurns like a man possessed. All in all, a very moving performance.

Derek Oliver – Master Of Mayhem
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www.rockcandymag.com created and maintained by Ross Sampson Solutions

Printed by Sterling Press Limited, Kettering Venture Park, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 6SU, England.

Distributed by Marketforce, 2nd Floor, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU, England.

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THIS ISSUE'S BIG QUESTION – GENE, PAUL, ACE OR PETER?

THE TEAM

Owner and Publisher: Derek Oliver
Unquestionably Ace, the man with a rocket in his pocket.
Editor: Howard Johnson
Ace, 'cos he's spaced!
Editor At Large: Malcolm Dome
Ace, the unpredictable element of Kiss that made the band so rock'n'roll.
Art Director: Andy Hunns
Ace every time. The only rock star in Kiss.
Production Editor: Louise Johnson
Paul – for the dancing.
Creative Direction: Julia Melanie Goode
The Starchild.
Web Guy: Ross Sampson
Paul – for style, commitment, leadership and charisma.
Facebook Captain: John Nicholson
I like cats, so it's got to be Peter.
Social Media Guru: Michael Brandvold
Paul, the heart, soul and creative vision of the band.
Lord Of PR: Benjamin Niebla II
Paul, the voice behind such legendary songs as 'Detroit Rock City' and 'Love Gun'

CONTRIBUTORS

Rob Evans
Paul all the way.
Giles Hamilton
Ace, of course. How could it be anyone else?
Jon Hotten
Paul. The voice, the chest hair, the scene in *Decline Of Western Civilization Pt II: The Metal Years* where he's in bed with all those girls...
Dave Ling
Paul, especially 20 years ago.
Dave Reynolds
Ace, because he gave *Rock Candy* a candid interview.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Getty Images
Julia Goode
IconicPix
Tony Mottram

Photo: Getty Images/Erica Echenberg/Redferns

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50 ACE FREHLEY

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Editing this issue's feature on band logos and where they came from allowed me to enjoy a little trip down memory lane, going back to the time when the embroidered denim jacket was the height of heavy metal fashion in the UK. It seems almost quaint now, but when I first started listening to heavy music at the tail end of the '70s, the denim jacket was a vital part of rock culture. It signified a dedication to a certain kind of music, a certain lifestyle, and those of us who wore these jackets took the business of decorating them very seriously.

The greatest irony of it was surely the fact that a bunch of testosterone-fuelled young men (for the wearers of the denim jacket were mostly male) found something exciting in the art of needlework, spending hours sewing the names and logos of their favourite bands on the back of their jackets. On the surface it didn't seem like the most macho of pursuits, but that didn't seem to bother any of us as we got to work with needle and thread, working out the best way to faithfully reproduce Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Thin Lizzy or AC/DC. Doubtless some people cheated and got their mums to do it for them. But I remember conversations outside venues and in nearby pubs where rockers would proudly explain how they'd chosen the bands that adorned their jackets and how many painstaking hours of personal sacrifice had gone into reproducing the Rush 'naked man' logo. I'm sure a psychologist would have a field day with all this stuff!

As for me, well my mum was useless at anything practical. So with a burning urge to show my passion for the Scorpions I set about sewing – what else? – a scorpion onto my jacket. It was, it must be said, a God-awful attempt. For some reason I used overly thick, lime green wool. Perhaps it was all I could get my hands on. Whatever the reason, it was a very bad idea. The end result looked nothing like a scorpion and a lot like a radioactive blob. I wore the jacket anyway, most likely to the amusement of the finer practitioners of the art. I jettisoned the logo jacket pretty quickly when I decided I was far more stylish than that, opting for the satin tour jacket and the spray-on jeans at the start of the '80s. In retrospect it wasn't really a better look. And 40 years on I now look back on 'The Embroidered Denim Jacket Years' with great affection. I imagine you do too.

Enjoy the issue.

Howard Johnson – Editor
Email me at **hojo@rockcandymag.com**

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The hair metal pin-up on why there was so much more to him than just a hairy chest.

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Eyes down, tin helmet on, pen at the ready. You're primed to take on the *Rock Candy* crossword.

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ROCK CANDY VIDEO PLAYLISTS

THERE'S GREAT ROCK MUSIC ALL OVER YOUTUBE, THE PROBLEM IS FINDING IT. SO LET US TAKE THE PAIN OUT OF SEARCHING WITH OUR EASY-TO-ACCESS VIDEO PLAYLISTS. SIMPLY TYPE THE WORDS IN BRACKETS INTO YOUR YOUTUBE SEARCH BOX... AND ROCK!

FIVE SUPER SONGS FROM Z-HEADS

Chosen by John Nicholson

Zebra – (Zebra Live @ The Houston Summit 1983)
This 45-minute live show is a superb reminder of how damn good the band were at this time. While it's a straightforward live shoot, complete with close-ups of 1980s keyboard racks and that lovely white double-neck guitar Randy Jackson used to play, it's all smoothly and seamlessly done without gimmicks or effects. The sound is great, too, so what we have here is a tremendous live document of a tremendous live band.

Zephyr – 'St James Infirmary' (ZEPHYR featuring Tommy Bolin 'St James Infirmary' – Barry Richards Show)
This is rare footage of a young Tommy Bolin playing in his first major band, Zephyr – a wonderful jazzy blues rock act from Boulder, Colorado. The footage is lo-fi with pretensions to artiness and it begins with a chap painting 'Zephyr' on a faux brick wall. It all looks very DIY, and early '70s garishness is in full effect, but the music is loud and clear. Vocalist Candy Givens has a tremendous set of pipes, while Tommy is supremely cool.

ZZ Top – 'Just Got Paid' (ZZ Top Rockpalast Just Got Paid from Double Down Live)
A wonderful number crisply filmed at Germany's famous *Rockpalast* TV show, with the boys giving it some serious riffing to an awful lot of German fans. Bassist Dusty Hill and guitarist Billy Gibbons look like two 1920s hobos who just jumped a train heading south, but you can't take your eyes off them, especially when they come together to do that side-to-side shuffle thingy of theirs. And all the while the three-piece – completed by drummer Frank Beard – make their trademark magnificently effortless noise.

Frank Zappa – (FRANK ZAPPA - muffin man - Live 1977)
Zappa might have claimed he was no rock star guitar hero, but that's what he looks like here, stripped to the waist in front of an adoring crowd. With hand-held cameras right on stage and, this being 1977, still not cold and digital, you really get a sense of the live stink. Adrian Belew and various other stellar musicians also show off their chops, but this is Frank's stage. And when he pulls on that famous Gibson SG and tears out some heavy duty sonics it really is a most visceral and thrilling rock'n'roll moment.

Warren Zevon – 'Lawyers, Guns And Money' (Warren Zevon - Lawyers, Guns And Money - 4/18/1980 - Capitol Theatre (Official))
Although this is super-basic footage, shot in black and white with just two fixed cameras, one behind Zevon and one front and middle, this low-budget approach really adds to the atmosphere as the Z-Man pounds his way through a fabulous song, belting the piano and growling out the lyrics with true conviction.

FIVE VIDS WITH CELEBRITY CAMEOS

Chosen by Dave Reynolds

Stone Temple Pilots – 'Sour Girl' (Stone Temple Pilots - Sour Girl (Official Music Video))
Stone Temple Pilots were always one of the more melodic bands of the grunge era and 'Sour Girl' – from the band's fourth album 'No. 4' from 1999 – shows why they were a cut above. The video features bizarre *Teletubbies*-style creatures but also, more interestingly, Buffy The Vampire Slayer (aka Sarah Michelle Gellar). Lucky Scott Weiland gets to enjoy her attentions!

Thunder – 'Dirty Love' (Thunder - Dirty Love (US Version))
Thunder drummer Harry James is a fine chap and all that, but we can't help thinking he was punching above his weight in this US promo video from 1990 as he shares a saucy scene in the shower with Pamela Anderson! At the time Pammy had been a *Playboy* magazine 'Playmate Of The Month', but her meteoric *Baywatch* career had yet to be launched...

Tom Petty - 'Into The Great Wide Open' (Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers - Into The Great Wide Open)
The greatly missed Tom Petty was a fabulous lyricist who could conjure up wonderful imagery in his songs. 'Into The Great Wide Open' – and its accompanying video detailing the rise and fall of the song's main character Eddie Rebel – is no exception. Johnny Depp takes the lead role and it's funny to see art imitating life here, given that JD would later become part of Hollywood Vampires with Alice Cooper and Joe Perry. This is the kind of fantastic high budget video that you just don't see any more. Imagine how much it cost just to have Hollywood legend Faye Dunaway in a supporting role!

Valentine – 'No Way' (Valentine - No Way (Video))
New York City AOR legends Valentine enjoyed a brief day in the sun back in the early '90s thanks to a brilliant eponymous 1990 debut album that's already received the Rock Candy reissue treatment. There was a real buzz about the band and they enjoyed the luxury of a promotional budget that stretched to employing actress Ally Sheedy (star of *The Breakfast Club* and *St. Elmo's Fire*) to play the role of Valentine's biggest fan, raiding the dressing up box to disguise herself and sneak into band rehearsals.

Helix – 'Gimme Gimme Good Lovin'' (Gimme Gimme Good Lovin – Helix)
This 1984 video has become notorious in these more politically correct times, featuring as it does numerous scantily clad women dancing along to Helix in what is cheesily titled the 'Third Annual Miss Rock Fantasy Pageant'. Vocalist Brian Vollmer seems to be enjoying himself, though, as he belts out a cover of the Crazy Elephant song that was a hit back in 1969. There was a topless version of this vid too, and both edits feature porn star Traci Lords, in this softer version wearing a particularly fetching mask.

FIVE GRUNGE SONGS THAT HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF TIME

Chosen by Howard Johnson

Mother Love Bone – 'Stargazer' (Mother Love Bone - Stargazer)
Mother Love Bone frontman Andrew Wood was the great lost star of grunge, a man who died of a heroin overdose before this new form of rock could stamp its indelible mark. This clip looks like a collection of home video footage pulled together to accompany a song from the band's only album 'Apple' (featuring Pearl Jam's Stone Gossard and Jeff Ament), which was released after Wood's death in March of 1990 at the age of just 24. It's poignant as hell for obvious reasons, but also hints at the legend Wood could have been. Imagine Mark Bolan fronting Led Zep in reflective mode and you're getting somewhere close. Wow!

Candlebox - 'Far Behind' (CANDLEBOX - "Far Behind" (official video))
The Seattle band that nobody talked about, Candlebox nonetheless had a huge US hit with 'Far Behind' in 1993. Guess what? The press were wrong and the public was right. This is a genuine rock song, dark as grunge so often was, but with a clear classic rock heritage, especially in the breakout section at the end. The tune was written about Mother Love Bone's Andrew Wood, and Candlebox singer Kevin Martin – looking impossibly young in a scuzzy-looking video filmed in a dilapidated house – delivers a deeply moving vocal. Rediscover this immediately.

Alice In Chains – 'Would?' (Alice In Chains - Would? (Official Video))
Alice In Chains were, in my opinion, the greatest grunge band bar none and their 'Dirt' album from 1992 is the finest release to come out of the genre. All of its 13 tracks are incredible, but 'Would?' (another song in memory of Andrew Wood) is perhaps the pick of the crop. It packs a heavyweight emotional punch with confessional lyrical moments from vocalist Layne Staley, but guitarist Jerry Cantrell always lets you know that this is a band with a beating rock heart. The video is performance-based and gives you a real sense of AIC's visual power, though bassist Mike Starr's stripey shorts seem hilariously out of place.

Pearl Jam – 'Alive' (Pearl Jam - Alive (Official Video))
If you, like me, haven't listened to Pearl Jam in a while, then you should do yourself a favour and check out this black and white live video to remind yourself what a scorching, intense rock band PJ were in their earliest days. Eddie Vedder is truly captivating here as he sings this heartfelt song – in part autobiographical – about a protagonist who discovers the man he calls dad isn't his biological father after all. It's a heavy lyric, but the band's rock'n'roll performance in the video, together with some enthusiastic stagediving – adds some very manly testosterone to proceedings.

Smashing Pumpkins – 'Cherub Rock' (The Smashing Pumpkins - Cherub Rock (Official Video))
Opening their second album 'Siamese Dream' with this monster back in 1993 was a perfect statement of intent from the Chicago band. 'Cherub Rock' features a furious and infectious riff that acts as an interesting counterpoint to Billy Corgan's childlike, whimsical vocal style. It was rock, but definitely not as we knew it. The video looks homegrown enough to establish grunge credentials as the band run through their paces behind visuals that are treated with cod-psychedelic stylings.

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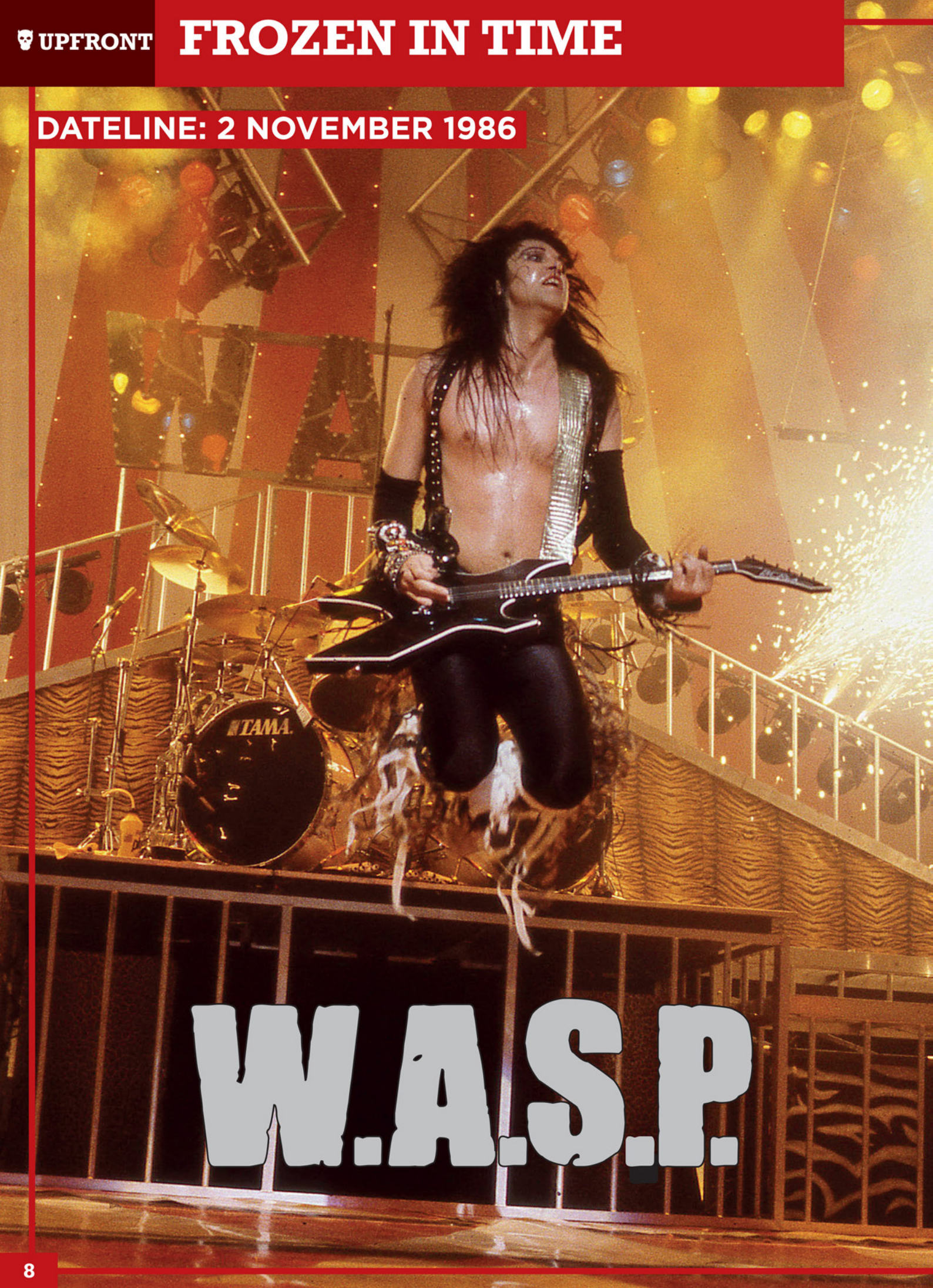
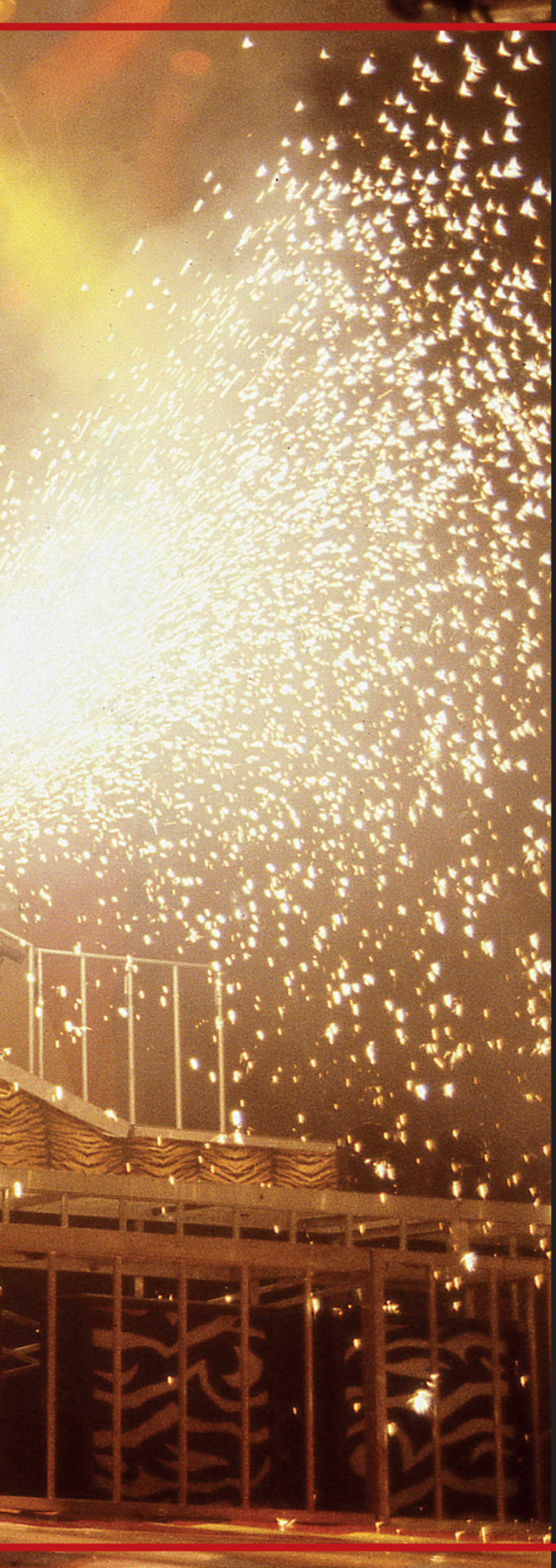
FROZEN IN TIME

DATELINE: 2 NOVEMBER 1986





Rock'n'roll has often been compared to a modern-day circus. This fantastic shot shows us why...

IN AMONGST ALL THE shock'n'roll theatrics that helped LA band W.A.S.P. create a buzz when they first emerged in 1984, it was easy to forget the power of the band's music. Led by one-time New York Doll, bassist and vocalist Blackie Lawless (real name Steven Edward Duren), W.A.S.P. achieved notoriety with an expletive-laden debut single 'Animal (F*ck Like A Beast)' and live shows that featured raw meat and racks of semi-naked women. It wasn't for the faint-hearted. However, by the time of the band's third album, 1986's 'Inside The Electric Circus', it was obvious that Lawless had somewhat tired of the gratuitous outrage and was looking to focus minds more on music. He moved from bass to rhythm guitar for this album and – alongside lead guitarist Chris Holmes, bassist Johnny Rod and drummer Steve Riley – looked to expand the band's glam metal style to better reflect his more varied tastes. Two cover versions made the cut for 'Inside The Electric Circus' – Uriah Heep's 'Easy Living' and Humble Pie's 'I Don't Need No Doctor' – as the band, managed by Iron Maiden mentor Rod Smallwood, spread its wings.

THE GROUP'S first two albums, 1984's 'W.A.S.P.' and 1985's 'The Last Command' had both gone gold in the US. 'Inside The Electric Circus' was designed to send the band into the platinum bracket. In fact, it sent W.A.S.P. backwards, failing to match the commercial success of its predecessors. This failure wasn't down to a lack of effort, though. Despite this new, less confrontational W.A.S.P., the band's live shows that accompanied the album release were still memorably OTT affairs, with the band performing inside what to all intents and purposes was a rock'n'roll circus ring. As this photo proves, it was quite a spectacle. Lawless was an extremely captivating performer, always intent on providing a value-for-money experience.

THIS SHOT comes from a show at London's famous Hammersmith Odeon venue and proves that the frontman really was in his element in front of an audience. With enough pyrotechnic flash to power the UK's National Grid, the photo reminds us of an altogether different time for music, when even mid-level bands were able to provide a real live spectacle. Nowadays it's only the mega-groups that are able to deliver eye-catching, effects-laden live shows. The economics of the music business – and the erosion of physical album sales in particular – has meant that most groups now rely on live performance to generate the lion's share of their income. Keeping costs down is a fundamental part of the business plan, hence pared-down stage shows. The likes of Rammstein are few and far between in 2019. It's hard to figure out how a band like W.A.S.P., 1980s vintage, could make financial sense today – and more's the pity. Hard rock bands often prided themselves on their wild stage sets and this band was one of the most eye-catching of all time in the live arena. Still, we all have our memories – and fantastic photos like this – to remember a truly golden era of live rock performance.

HOWARD JOHNSON

Photo: IconicPix/George Bodnar Archive

STEP BACK IN TIME

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 1988

ROCK CANDY'S DAVE LING LEAFS THROUGH THE BACK PAGES OF THE UK ROCK PRESS TO BRING THE BIG NEWS ITEMS OF THE DAY BACK TO LIFE AND ANALYSE HOW THOSE STORIES REALLY PLAYED OUT…

Poison guitarist CC DeVille. "Among the best."

POISON: "WE DIDN'T LOCK KERRANG! MEN IN A CUPBOARD!"

DATELINE: 12 NOVEMBER 1988

MAGAZINE: *KERRANG!*

SEVEN MONTHS AFTER THE infamous story that Poison had locked *Kerrang!* writer Mick Wall and photographer Ross Halfin in a dressing room at the Nassau Coliseum in New York (see Wall's version of events recounted in Issue Six of *Rock Candy*), Dave Reynolds interviewed the band's singer Bret Michaels to get their version of events. The *Kerrang!* men claimed they were intentionally incarcerated in an empty room for "several hours", causing them to miss the start of the group's support slot to David Lee Roth. As a protest, Wall refused to review the show for *Kerrang!* The incident had caused some UK damage to the reputation of the Los Angeles-based glam quartet, who at the time were on the verge of a massive breakthrough Stateside, even though they still hadn't played live in Britain.

Nonetheless, Poison paid a visit to the UK to promote their second album, 'Open Up And Say... Ahh!', that had been released in May of 1988. But the band was known here more for the 'Cupboardgate' controversy than any of their songs. Little wonder, then, that Michaels was anxious to brush it under the carpet.

"I'll say point blank that Mick and Ross were not trapped in a room," insisted the singer. "What pissed me off most of all about the article was that they used it to talk about their own personal grievances, and not the band or the music."

With British dates pencilled in for the spring of 1989, Michaels continued: "I do hope that the kids in England will come to see us and give us a chance, because we really aren't an egotistical band at all."

MICHAELS WAS on a mission to highlight Poison's proficiency as a live act. "We're all about kicking ass," he claimed. "CC [DeVille] is probably among the best guitarists I've seen play, and Bobby [Dall] is one motherf*cker of a bass player, whilst Rikki [Rockett] proves what a great drummer he is with his solo every night. All I want is the chance to prove that this band is great."

Michaels insisted that Poison had faced the same issue in America: "Once the first record started to sell we got an underground following and 'Talk Dirty To Me' became a hit single, so the press began to like us. People were writing how we were like Van Halen with the image of Hanoi Rocks."

This statement played straight into the hands of writer Reynolds, who knew that for a while a few months earlier Poison had toned down their glam image for a decidedly lower key look. Mascara-loving Dave felt "cheated". This surprised Bret, who explained that "a load of new bands are doing the same thing we were doing two years ago...

"If people enjoy our music then that's great, and if you don't then don't f*ckin' bother with us," Michaels responded. "Don't let the way we look bother you, at least come and see a show. In Europe and Britain especially we have an awful lot to prove and it's not going to be easy. All I'm asking for is to be given an even break."

Photos: Getty Images/George Rose

THE 'CUPBOARD' experience with *Kerrang!* magazine had left a bitter taste in Poison's mouth and Michaels admitted that he took media-based criticism of his band "very personally."

"No matter whether there are a thousand people who love you, it's the guy who hates you – especially if he writes for a paper – that you take notice of the most," the frontman admitted. "It's annoying to have played a show where so many people loved it, yet the guy sent to review it is the only one who hates us."

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

BY THE TIME DAVE Reynolds' *Kerrang!* article had appeared in print 'Open Up and Say... Ahh!' had already spawned two US hit singles, 'Nothin' But A Good Time' and 'Fallen Angel'. The song that would establish Poison as genuine stars, the power ballad 'Every Rose Has Its Thorn', had just started to gain traction too. When this single topped the *Billboard* chart on 24 December 1988 the band could stop worrying about journalists, photographers and cupboards.

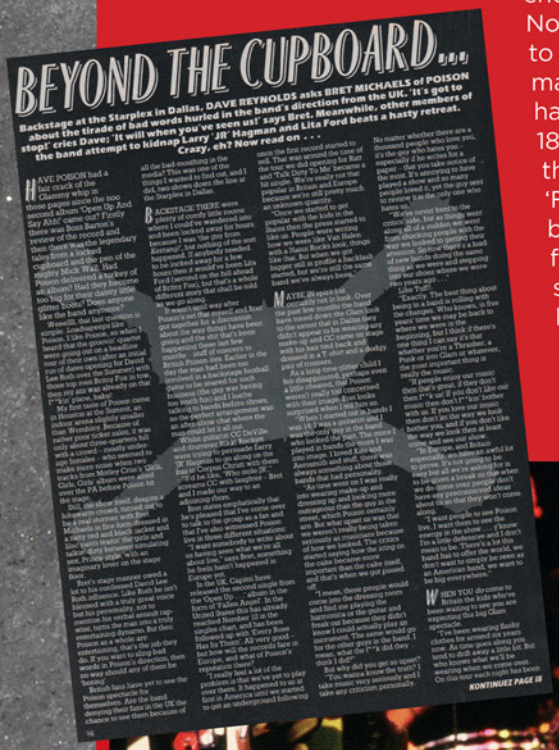
THE PROPOSED spring 1989 UK dates never materialised. Poison were too busy selling out enormodomes in North America to develop other markets, and fans had to wait another 18 months and a third album, 1990's 'Flesh & Blood', before the band set foot on a British stage, playing low-key warm-up shows at London's Marquee Club and Rock City in Nottingham ahead of a Monsters Of Rock festival performance headlined by Whitesnake.

Spawning five hit singles in the US – 'Unskinny Bop' and 'Something To Believe In' even made the Top 10 – 'Flesh & Blood' was a massive album for Poison, going on to sell more than seven million copies worldwide. Yet despite the release going gold in the UK, Britain never fully embraced Poison's cartoonish charm.

IN 1993 the band tried to get serious, replacing CC DeVille with Richie Kotzen for the underrated 'Native Tongue' album. They even returned to Britain, though Kotzen's abrupt dismissal for his amorous intentions toward Rikki Rockett's fiancée brought this version of the band to an abrupt halt. For the record, Richie later married the lady concerned, one Deanna Eve Lindstrom, but the union didn't last.

DEVILLE MADE a return to the group in 1996, but he also flew in for some British dates with his side-band, Samantha 7, in February 2001. Watching him perform on stage at the tiny Cartoon club in Croydon was a *very* surreal experience.

Despite headlining at the Sweden Rock Festival in 2008, Poison haven't returned to the UK since 'Native Tongue'. The band's most recent all-original album was 'Hollyweird' way back in 2002. However, Poison's so-called classic-era line-up remains active today, which means that there is still a glimmer of hope for more UK dates in the future.



BEYOND THE CUPBOARD...

Backstage at the Starplex in Dallas, DAVE REYNOLDS asks BRET MICHAELS of POISON about the tirade of bad words hurled in the band's direction from the UK. 'It's got to stop!' cries Dave; 'It will when you've seen us!' says Bret. Meanwhile, other members of the band attempt to kidnap Larry 'JR' Hagman and Lita Ford beats a hasty retreat. Crazy, eh? Now read on . . .

HAVE POISON had a fair crack of the Clearmy whip in these pages since the 100 second album 'Open Up And Say Ahh!' came out? Firstly there was Boss Barton's review of the record and then there was the legendary tales from a lodged cupboard and the pen of the mighty Mick Wall. Had Poison delivered a turkey of an album? Had they become too big for their daintry little glitter boots? Does anyone like the band anymore? In a word, that last question is simple. Loadsapeople like Poison. I like Poison, so when I heard that the groovin' quartet were going on a headline tour of these own (after an initial run of dates opening for David Lee Roth over the Summer) with Jon Bon Jovi's Bitter Fix in tow, those top men Bret and Bobby then my ass was already on that bus.

My first taste of Poison came in Houston at the Summit, an indoor arena slightly smaller than Wembley. Because of their poor ticket sales, it was only about three-quarters full with a crowd – mostly smitten pop females – who seemed to make more noise when two tracks from Motley Crüe's 'Girls, Girls, Girls' album were aired over the PA before Poison hit the stage.

Poison, all-blue finish, despite a lukewarm crowd, turned out to be a real stormer with Bret Michaels in fine form dressed in a racy red and black jacket and like 'arm-leather' trousers and tailor-dirty boots and carrying a mic, P-male style, with an imaginary lover on the stage floor.

Bret's stage manner owed a lot to his confessed David Lee Roth influence. Like Roth he isn't blessed with a truly great voice but his personality, not to mention his verbal assault rapwise, turns the man into a truly entertaining performer. But then Poison as a whole are entertaining, that's the job they do. If you want to sling bad words in Poison's direction, then no way should any of them be hearing.

British fans have yet to see the Poison spectacle for themselves. Are the band denying their fans in the UK the chance to see them because of all the bad-mouthing in the media? This we had to find out, and I things I started to get the line it did, two shows down the line at the Starplex in Dallas.

BACKSTAGE THERE were plenty of comfy sofa rooms where I could've sustained into and been locked away for hours because I was bored to death. But nothing of the sort happened. I actually needed to be locked away for a few hours then it would've been Lita Ford I'm on the bill ahead of Britny Fox), but that's a whole different story that shall be told as we go along.

It wasn't all by way after Poison's set that evening, and Bret got together for a discussion about the way things have been going and the band's future happening these last few months – and there's been a day the man from Poison see. Earlier in the day the man had been involved in a backstage football game to be shared by the band as after the show. Bret and I took talking to locals before shows, to be the perfect arrangement was as after that clear where the evening should let it all out.

Whilst guitarist CC DeVille and drummer Rikki Rockett were trying to persuade Larry 'JR' Hagman to go along on the bus to Corpus Christi with them (as in Corpus Christi, which JR – "It'd be like, 'Who stole JR?' screams CC with laughter – Bret and I made our way to an adjoining room.

Bret states emphatically that he's pleased that I've come over he's pleased that I've come over to talk to the group as a fan and that I've also witnessed Poison live in three different situations: "I want somebody to write about us having seen what we're all about live," says Bret, something he feels hasn't happened in Europe yet.

In the UK, Capitol have released the second single from the Open Up . . . album in the form of 'Fallen Angel'. In the States this has already reached Number 13 in the singles chart, and has been followed up with 'Every Rose Has Its Thorn'. All very good – but how will the records fare in Europe, and what of Poison's reputation there?

"I really feel a lot of the problems is that we've yet to play over there. It happened to us at first in America until we started to get an underground following

No matter whether there are a thousand people who love you, it's the guy who hates you – especially if he writes for a paper – that you take notice of the most. It's annoying to have played a show and so many people loved it, yet the only one hates us.

"We've never bowed to the critics' pulls, but as things went along all of a sudden we were from shocks people with the way we looked to getting their attention. Now there's a load of new bands doing the same thing as we were and stepping on our shoes where we were very angry guys."

Like Puff?

"Exactly. The best thing about being a band is rolling with the changes. When we were in the years' time we may be back to beginning, but I think if there's one thing I can say's that whether you're a Thrasher, a Punk or into Glam or whatever the most important thing is really the music.

"If people enjoy our music then that's great. If they don't then f**k off. If you don't like our music then don't f**kin' bother with us. If you love our music then don't let the way we look bother you, and if you don't like the way we look then at least come and see our show.

"In Europe, and Britain especially, we have an awful lot to prove. It's not coming to be easy but as we're asking for is to be given a break so that when we do come over people don't have any preconceived ideas about us so that they won't come along.

"I want people to see Poison live, I want them to see the energy in the show . . . I know I'm a little defensive and I don't mean to be. There's a lot this band has to offer the world, we don't want to simply be seen as an American band, we want to be big everywhere."

WHEN YOU do come to Britain the kids who've been waiting to see you are expecting the big Glam spectacle.

"I've been wearing flashy clothes for around six years now. As time goes along you tend to drift away a little bit. But who knows what we'll be wearing when we come over. On this tour each night has been

KONTINUEZ PAGE 18

Poison frontman Bret Michaels rocks out with bassist Bobby Dall. "All I'm asking for is to be given an even break."

STEP BACK IN TIME

The blonde bombshell rock pin-up who should have been a *bona fide* superstar

LITA FORD JAMS WITH JON BON JOVI IN LONDON

DATELINE: 17 DECEMBER 1988

MAGAZINE: *KERRANG!*

ON 7 DECEMBER GUITAR-shredding rocker Lita Ford arrived at the Marquee Club for a headline date and brought along a friend. Given that the former Runaway had landed the support slot on Bon Jovi's 1988 tour in support of the 'New Jersey' album, it was perhaps no surprise that Jon Bon Jovi joined Lita onstage at the London venue, newly relocated from Wardour Street to premises on Charing Cross Road. On the surface it looked like an inspired move. Bon Jovi was the name on everybody's lips at the time, and the 'New Jersey Syndicate' tour was only weeks old. And yet this guest appearance somehow ended up backfiring on poor Lita.

AT THE time Ford was touring in support of her third solo album, 'Lita'. She was managed by Sharon Osbourne, which had led to a duet with Sharon's husband Ozzy on a ballad called 'Close My Eyes Forever'. The 30-year-old was clearly being presented as a sexy rock chick, but the image perhaps obscured her prowess as a musician. And matters weren't helped when *Kerrang!* dispatched its chief cynic, Chris Watts, to review the Marquee show. Watts filed a report that was subsequently entitled 'Ford Fiesta'. Ouch.

AT THE start of his critique Watts appeared sympathetic towards an artist he described as "half Wendy O Williams, half Tammy Wynette", claiming that "with arena experience and a hell of an album to tout, this should have been a superlative display."

Kerrang!'s man then went on to describe how Lita took to the stage wearing "a little black rubber number", teasing "the ranks of lechers with the sight of bare midriff." The writer was not disappointed with Ford's performance, however, and while at times he was acidic Watts seemed fairly affectionate toward his victim, praising her "epic broadside of thundering album tracks" and admitting that he could even have hugged her after she accidentally fell over the drum riser "with typical gawky clumsiness."

WHERE IT all went wrong, though, was with the so-called 'surprise' arrival of JBJ, who was filmed by two video crews while being heralded as "The Medicine Man". Bon Jovi's appearance put Lita's status into perspective. Sporting a Marquee Club T-shirt, Jon led the charge through a version of Grand Funk Railroad's 1973 classic 'We're An American Band'.

"In Bon Jovi's shadow," Watts pointed out, Ford had only really "delivered what was expected." Tellingly, "Without being truly great, she failed to deliver the spectacular." The message was simple: reflected glory can be a dangerous thing.

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

LATER REISSUED BY ROCK Candy Records, 'Lita' is a fantastic album. Most fans believe it marked the pinnacle of Ford's solo career. Produced by Mike Chapman, the album not only included the duet with Ozzy that made the *Billboard* US Top 10, but also 'Can't Catch Me' (co-penned with Lemmy from Motörhead) and 'Falling In And Out Of Love' (written with Mötley Crüe's Nikki Sixx). This brilliantly crafted, radio-friendly release should have turned the blonde bombshell rock pin-up into a *bona fide* superstar. Somehow, however, that didn't happen.

'Lita' went platinum in the US, but follow-up album, 1990's 'Stiletto', failed to hit the same heights. As the 1990s saw traditional rock on a downward curve, the under-performance of 1991's 'Dangerous Curves' and 1995's 'Black' saw Lita effectively drop off the musical map while she raised her two sons.

MS FORD finally returned in 2009 with an album, 'Wicked Wonderland', that she has now disowned. Her last studio recording, 2012's 'Living Like A Runaway', was a far better effort, but Lita's personal life has been particularly fraught in the wake of a hugely acrimonious 2011 divorce from her then-husband, former Nitro vocalist Jim Gillette. In 2018 Lita said she had finally managed to see her sons for the first time in 10 years.

AS AN interesting aside, Lita's Marquee gig that was reviewed by *Kerrang!* is indirectly responsible for the forming of another rock band. Her jam with Jon Bon Jovi was witnessed by Luke Morley and Danny Bowes, then of the band Terraplane, and their manager Malcolm McKenzie. It caused them to disband the floundering Terraplane and form a brand new, more focused outfit – Thunder.

"The place went absolutely nuts for Jon, and I thought: 'We can do better than that c*nt'," Morley told me years later. "So Danny, Malcolm and I trotted over the road to the St Moritz nightclub and concocted a plan. We clinked glasses and that was it, Thunder were off and running."

KONCERTZ

The pages to make your hairy head go backwards and forwards very fast!

LITA FORD
Marquee, London

FUNNY, I heard Lita on Radio One just the other day. Some DJ talked over the guitar solo and made dumb quips about changing his name to Deadly. I think he was under the impression that 'Lita' was the first album. So I came to see Lita Ford experience and a hell of an album superlative display to counteract the hacky, tacky advertisements.

Half Wendy O, half Tammy Wynette, Lita takes to the stage in a little black rubber number. Gradually she winds up a souled-out 'Dancin' On The Edge', teasing and teasing her voice, until she ranks of lechers are satisfied with the sight of bare midriff. And that, for all the world, is Lita.

Lita Ford is compromise. Sex sells and so she wiggles her bottom from the drum riser. "You smell of sex, do you want more", she threatens in her sexual rasp. Yes, Lita, we do. We have gas cylinders in our trousers! Yet she is also a guitarist, a musician, and straps on a large double-neck during either big ballad 'Close My Eyes Forever' to prove it. Indeed she looks positively lost without her guitar and cannot dance to 'Gotta Let Go'. She has a lot of guitars, I'm not disappointed with Lita's performance tonight. Now being solid as Metal's teen-angst Torch, costume changes and hanging onto the mike like a lover's arm. Lita Ford delivered an epic broadside of thundering album tracks. Yet amongst the peripheral clutter of camp, LA showmanship, there is a diamond girl with a big bottom who could rise above The Wet Dream. She is positively endearing and perfectly natural between numbers. When she trips over the drum riser with typical gawky clumsiness, I could hug her forever. She leans out into the crowd, thrusting the microphone over their heads, and really hopes they know the words to 'Falling In And Out Of Love'. Her expression as they roar their response is genuinely touching.

"I think there's a friend of mine here tonight," she announces as the band ham up 'Kiss Me Deadly'. The rumours were a little, erm, wild concerning an impromptu guest appearance. So video crews took their cue from Lita's coy intro.

"The Medicine Man, Mr Jon Bon..." everything else is lost as the crowd cheer the sight of a little history. The stage is crowded with black hats and muso camaraderie. The man in the Marquee T-shirt delivers 'American Band' with toe-tappin' spontaneity, and it's all Lita can do to laugh proudly in Bon Jovi's shadow.

Sure, Lita delivered what was expected. Without the final intrusion of the truly great, however, she didn't deliver the spectacular. But Lita is here, and for all her tomboy cornball is still mildly lovable.

CHRIS WATTS

LITA FORD: there's no-one sweeta

LITA AND Jon Bon Jovi: a little bit of history from the man in the Marquee T-shirt

FORD FIESTA

Lita onstage in 1988. Better without JBJ...

Photos: Getty Images/Paul Natkin

STEP BACK IN TIME

Crimson Glory photographed at the Metal Hammer Festival, Dortmund, Germany, 30 April 1989. L-R: Ben Jackson (rhythm guitar), Jeff Lords (bass), Midnight (vocals), Jon Drenning (lead guitar), Dana Burnell (drums)

CRIMSON GLORY "NOT JUST A POOR MAN'S QUEENSRŸCHE"

DATELINE: 26 NOVEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *KERRANG!*

IN DARING TO SUGGEST that Queensrÿche were "slowly suffocating themselves to death," Derek Oliver recognised that he might be making himself a little unpopular in certain quarters. Back in late-1988 the Seattle band were enjoying unprecedented success with their third album, 'Operation: Mindcrime'. But Derek had a suspicion that the album's conceptually based excellence would be impossible for the band to surpass. And so it would prove...

EVER ONE to praise the underdog, Oliver was determined to draw attention to a newer, equally fascinating outfit from Sarasota, Florida. *Kerrang!* had already hailed 'Transcendence', the second album by Crimson Glory, as "heavy metal with the caress of a silk glove." Now it was time to get to know what the band's manifesto was. Crimson Glory chose to hide their faces behind pieces of sculpted, polished steel on debut album, 1986's 'Crimson Glory'. But 'Transcendence' saw the masks stripped back, *Phantom Of The Opera*-style, to reveal a little more of what lay beneath. Lead guitarist Jon Drenning felt this was a metaphor for the band's musical growth.

"It's part of our overall development," he informed Derek. "It's just the growing-up process. Maybe next time we'll take off the masks completely. This album is much better than the first one and while there's still room to improve I want to be in a position to deliver better albums all the time."

THE ELEPHANT in the room was the unmistakable similarity between Crimson Glory and Queensrÿche, something that was entirely evident on the track 'Lonely'.

"I certainly admire Queensrÿche, so that's something I take as a compliment," Drenning responded. "But please, any suggestion that we've copied them is utter rubbish. I'm confident that people will soon realise it's our style, and if you really listen you can tell it's Crimson Glory.

"The comparison we draw most is that [vocalist] Midnight sings like Geoff Tate," Drenning continued. "However, Geoff Tate was originally accused of sounding like Rob Halford on Judas Priest's 'Sad Wings Of Destiny'. These days, of course, nobody can be bothered to mention that."

THERE WERE other rumours that needed addressing too, especially the one that suggested Crimson Glory were a Christian metal band. Many fans were reading things into the band's lyrics. The first album's song 'Azrael', for example, included the words, *"I am the blinding light/ Probing the endless night/There's no escaping me."* In addition, Drenning had admitted the band's name stood for the blood of the lamb and the risen glory of the lamb, Jesus Christ.

"Nobody in the band is Christian and I'm personally more into Far Eastern philosophy than organised Western religions," the guitarist replied. "We know right from wrong and, frankly, that's all you need. But we do try to project a fairly positive message."

As for the concept behind the 'Transcendence' album, Jon was happy to explain. "It symbolises passing beyond the range of known competition or limitations, earning, in fact, the supreme merit of quality. The sleeve is the key to the whole thing; all the symbols and writing are a combination of Hebrew and Egyptian. Each of the 10 circles represents a state of consciousness – be it beauty, divinity or glory – and the top circle stands for perfection. The idea is to discipline yourself and reach that final circle."

So now you know!

Photos: IconicPix/George Chin

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

MORE THAN THREE DECADES after it was first released 'Transcendence' still does Crimson Glory great credit. It's hard to argue with Derek Oliver's assertion at the time that the band offered "something that even Queensrÿche had been totally ignoring. These guys mix the heaviest of metal with a degree of pomposity not heard since the great days of Styx or even Kansas."

The album provided a single of note in the form of 'Lonely', though an interview given by Drenning to *RAW* magazine at the time didn't do him any credit. In it he boasted of "abusing women". Oh dear.

CRIMSON GLORY are rightly cited as one of the trailblazers of the progressive-metal genre, but they simply couldn't keep a line-up together. Guitarist Ben Jackson and drummer Dana Burnell both quit the band after the tour promoting 'Transcendence', and despite having stepped up from indie label Roadrunner to the major Atlantic Records for a third album, 1991's 'Strange And Beautiful', vocalist Midnight soon left and the band fell apart.

Midnight (real name John Patrick McDonald) was both unfit and unwilling to rejoin Crimson Glory for a reunion that led to the 'Astronomica' album in 1999. He sadly died of a stomach aneurism 10 years later at the age of just 47. The reception awarded to his replacement Wade Black was tepid, and in 2010 Todd La Torre became Crimson Glory's latest singer.

Guitarist Jon Drenning. He's not in Queensrÿche!

CRIMS' of the CENTURY

LA TORRE'S quality soon marked him out as a star of the future and it was no surprise when Queensrÿche, licking their wounds after the acrimonious expulsion of Geoff Tate, snapped him up, first as part of a project called Rising West and then as a permanent addition in 2013. So far there have been three Todd-fronted 'Rÿche albums, each of which has allowed the band to rebuild its reputation.

By contrast, Crimson Glory struggled to withstand the loss of such a talented frontman and since 2013 the band has been on hiatus.

La Torre insists Queensrÿche are not to blame for 'stealing' him, explaining that the move was a direct result of Crimson Glory's own inactivity. "It was like I was a race horse locked in a stable," he once memorably explained.

SNIPPETS – SHORT, SHARP SHOCKS FROM NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1988

JIMMY PAGE BACK IN THE SPOTLIGHT

DATELINE: 23 NOVEMBER-6 DECEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *RAW*

Led Zeppelin's long-absent former guitarist spoke excitedly of a world tour for his solo debut, 'Outrider'. "Sales don't bother me at all," he claimed. "Provided what I do has quality, that's all that matters. I just want to get back into a live situation." Regrettably, notwithstanding the odd one-off and limited dates with The Firm, Coverdale-Page and The Black Crowes, Page hasn't hit the road since 2000.

ANGRY ANDERSON SCORES THE MOST UNLIKELY HIT OF THE YEAR

DATELINE: 17 DECEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *KERRANG!*

We scratched our heads in confusion when Rose Tattoo's pugnacious ex-frontman provided the soundtrack to the wedding between Scott Robinson and Charlene Mitchell (Jason Donovan and Kylie Minogue) in the Aussie soap *Neighbours*. "'Suddenly' was a truthful song about falling in love with my wife Lindy; my acknowledgement that I'd recovered from every beating I've ever had," he commented.

DIAMOND DAVE DELIVERS PARADISE AT WEMBLEY

DATELINE: 7-20 DECEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *RAW*

David Lee Roth's Wembley Arena gig on the 'Skyscraper' tour produced such a riveting spectacle that no fewer than three reviewers – Malcolm Dome, Mark Putterford and Dave Ling – were required to document all its glory, including guitarist Steve Vai, a boxing ring and that trusty surfboard. "This was probably the best rock show I've ever seen," summed up Putterford.

STEP BACK IN TIME

Living Colour stirring up "heavy metal, funk, jazz, punk, alt-rock and hip-hop into one almighty, rhythmic din."

LIVING COLOUR: "A BAND THAT DOES SOMETHING NEW"

DATELINE: 17 DECEMBER 1988

MAGAZINE: *KERRANG!*

COLOUR BY NUMBERS

"It's one for the (ticket) money! Two for the show! Three to get ready! Now go cats go!" sings PAUL 'Pink Suede Shoes' HENDERSON in praise of New York's LIVING COLOUR (pictured right). After seeing yet more of their paint-the-town-red live shows, he brushes up the following vivid pen portrait of the band's snowballing rise to fame

IT'S ABOUT NINE months since I first heard Living Colour, who at the time were a little known band from New York City, who at the time were called 'Vivid'.

Since then a lot has happened to the band. Since then a lot has happened to me. Since then a lot has happened to the world. Since then a lot has happened to everybody.

I KNOW THAT Living Colour have had a lot of publicity, I KNOW THAT they've been on the road a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been in the studio a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been happy a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been sad a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been in love a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been out of love a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been in debt a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been in bed a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been out of bed a lot, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of trouble, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of pain, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of hotels, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of cities, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of countries, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of continents, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of hemispheres, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of time zones, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of dimensions, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of universes, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of galaxies, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of solar systems, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of planets, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of moons, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of stars, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of comets, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of asteroids, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of meteorites, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of black holes, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of white holes, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of wormholes, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of time machines, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of parallel universes, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of alternate realities, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of simulations, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of dreams, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of nightmares, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of fantasies, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of realities, I KNOW THAT they've been in a lot of everything.

APART FROM the fact that a lot of new groups are getting their first album out, and

HAD *KERRANG!* WRITER PAUL Henderson been writing a school report for Living Colour's first term in the spotlight, he'd surely have resorted to the educational stock phrase of "slow but steady progress." Back in May, Henderson had singled out the New York-based quartet for "meteoric" stardom around the release of their flamboyant, genre-busting introductory album 'Vivid', something its US Top 10 success seemed to underline.

Seven months and 100,000 album sales later Living Colour had notched a debut hit single, 'Cult Of Personality', and performed all over the world, including a sell-out show at London's Astoria Theatre. Drummer Will Calhoun cited it as among the trek's most rewarding moments. "That was the biggest crowd we'd headlined in front of in England," he said. "It was affirming that people are getting to know our music."

BUT INSTANT success was never on the cards for a band daring enough to mix heavy metal, funk, jazz, punk, alt-rock and hip-hop into one almighty, rhythmic din. Plus there was also the matter of the largely political issues that they wrote about.

"Some people come to our shows because they love the way that Vernon [Reid] plays guitar; some come because they love the way Corey [Glover] sings, or they love the lyrics and what the band stands for," theorised bassist Muzz Skillings. "Or maybe they're at the point in their lives where they challenge themselves and do something different." Whatever the difficulties of trying to expand musical boundaries, though, Living Colour seemed very happy with their progress.

"The album has done a lot better than we would have thought," Glover insisted. "The fact that in the States we've sold 100,000 copies is much bigger than I was expecting, especially for a new band coming right out of the box."

Vernon Reid was quick to jump in with the observation that certain records by other artists were selling 100,000 copies *a week*, but Glover wouldn't be dissuaded: "A lot of good music never gets to see the light of day. My only hope was that 'Vivid' would get some sort of response. I never thought it would snowball the way it's going."

PROUD OF the way they rocked out onstage, Living Colour still enjoyed seeing the surprise on the faces of certain audience members unused to such levels of hard rock intensity from black musicians. "Sometimes at a show I look around and somebody – even at the front, digging it – will glance at me, and their expression is one of: 'I can't believe it'," chuckled Calhoun.

Glover echoed: "I've had people, opening bands or whatever, say: 'When I first heard about you guys I thought you wouldn't be able to pull it off. But then I saw it and I was blown away'."

The most important thing of all, stressed Reid, was that Living Colour's record company, Epic, remained patient.

"The thing is, we weren't signed as a band to sell records," he claimed. "We were signed as a band that was different and doing something new. Our record label, Epic, have got Michael Jackson, so they're not exactly hurting for cash. It's all working out okay."

Photos: Getty Images/Mick Hutson; Getty Images/Paul Natkin

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

VERNON REID'S THEORY ABOUT Living Colour not being expected to sell records was sweetly naïve. No matter how ground-breaking an act might be considered to be, major labels aren't in the habit of signing artists on the grounds of their importance. Living Colour *were* important, but without setting cash registers ringing their music was doomed. 'Cult Of Personality' represented a fantastic start, reaching the Top 20 on the US *Billboard* charts and bringing the band a Grammy for the Best Hard Rock Performance of 1990. But in those less-enlightened times Living Colour were swimming against the tide. Musicians such as Iron Maiden's Steve Harris, Lemmy of Motörhead, and Anthrax stood firmly in their corner. But metal has always been tribal and as Reid later told me in an interview, his band remained "unwilling to play by its rules and culture." Indeed, he felt some hardliners deemed Living Colour "provocative merely for existing."

Living Colour. L-R: Muzz Skillings (bass), Will Calhoun (drums), Corey Glover (vocals), Vernon Reid (guitar)

THE BAND'S big breakthrough never quite came and with internal pressure building things took a turn for the worse when Muzz Skillings walked away in 1992. Things eventually unravelled acrimoniously three years later during the uncompleted birth of a fourth studio album.

REUNITED IN 2000 with Skillings' original replacement Doug Wimbish on bass, Living Colour still record, tour and rattle cages today. Talking to me earlier this year and armed with decades of hindsight, vocalist Corey Glover recognised that Living Colour was a real rock disrupter. "It was a surprise to me that everything happened so quickly for us because I thought we'd be a slow-burn," he told me. "But I knew that what we were doing was very important."

It certainly was... and still is.

SNIPPETS – SHORT, SHARP SHOCKS FROM NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1988

TOM G WARRIOR DEFENDS CELTIC FROST'S SO-CALLED 'GLAM' ALBUM

DATELINE: DECEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *METAL FORCES*

"I want the fans to know that this was a planned step", Tom G Warrior told journalist Mike Exley when discussing 'Cold Lake', the controversial, critically lambasted third album from Celtic Frost. "This is just another musical evolution for the band. I appreciate that the style of music will seem different, but without doubt it's still based upon the original roots of Celtic Frost. Nobody can deny that."

MARILLION: "FISH'S NEW DIRECTION WAS CRAP"

DATELINE: 7-20 DECEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *RAW*

As the band began searching for a new lead singer, Marillion keyboardist Mark Kelly attempted to rationalise the departure of frontman Fish in an interview for the live album 'The Thieving Magpie'. "Fish wanted to go off and do something radically different from Marillion," he explained. "We tried playing in different styles and... basically we sounded crap." Replacement vocalist Steve Hogarth finally joined Marillion on 2 February 1989.

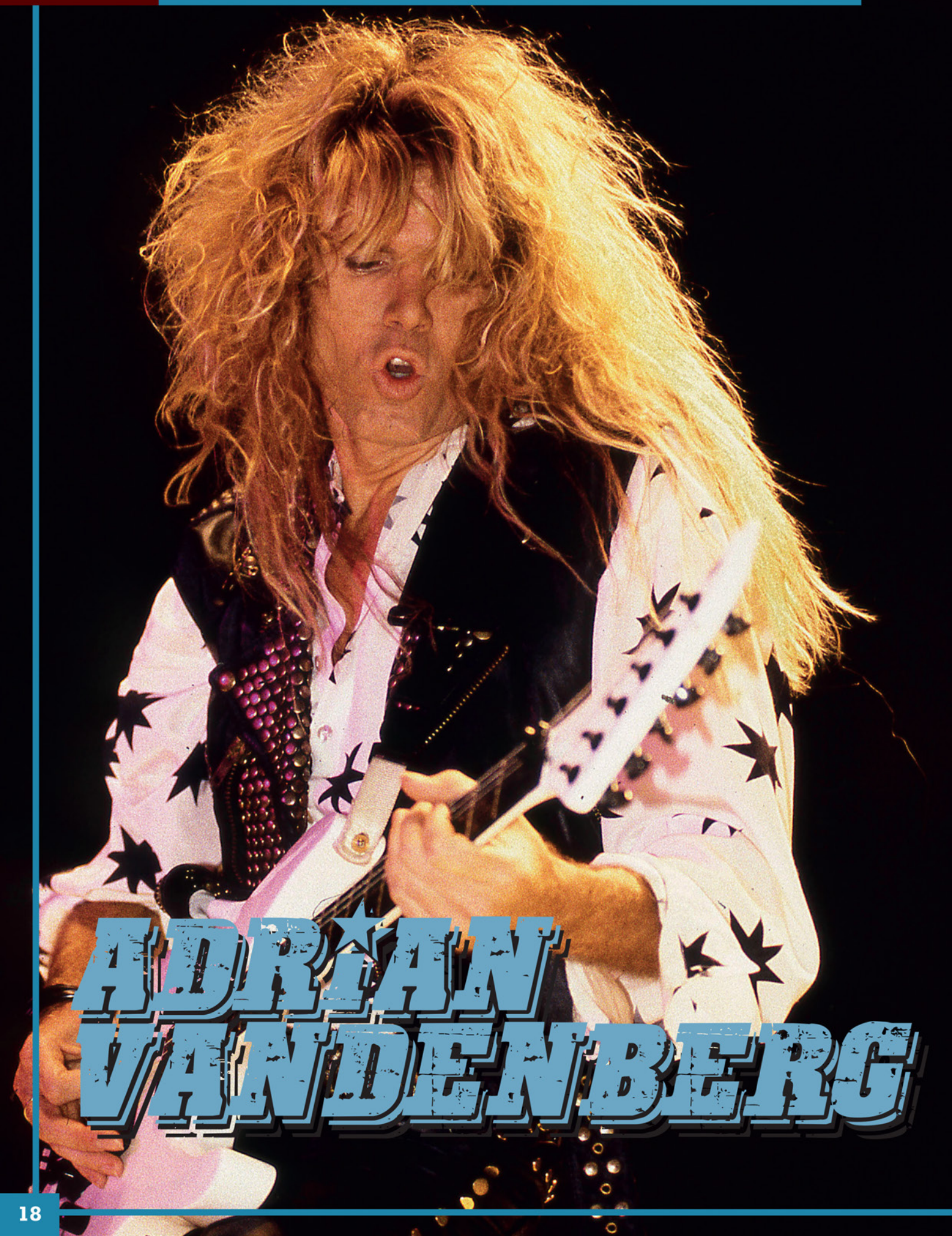
WRATHCHILD TACKLE CYNICAL JOURNALIST

DATELINE: DECEMBER 1988
MAGAZINE: *METAL FORCES*

When UK glam titans Wrathchild (as opposed to Wrathchild US) learned that *Metal Forces* writer Kelv Hellrazer had been telling people they'd "blown it" during a lay-off enforced by legal issues, they paid him a visit – in person and when he wasn't expecting it. "We're going to bury the people and bands who've kept the bed warm for us," promised singer Rocky Shades. "The buzz has started already."

PERSON OF INTEREST

ROCK CANDY SALUTES THE ROCK STARS WHO DID THINGS DIFFERENTLY...



ADRIAN VANDENBERG

BORN IN THE HAGUE in the Netherlands on 31 January 1954, Adrian Vandenberg (originally Adriaan van den Berg) always tried to develop his two artistic talents, guitar playing and painting. "I discovered art and music simultaneously," he says. "When I was two years old I had a cigar box with elastic bands slung round it, which I would twang. But I was scribbling on bits of paper at the same time – or so I was told."

Adrian didn't pick up a real guitar until the age of 15 – "I'd only listened to classical music up till then" – but made his first steps in the professional world of rock while still studying at art college. He received an offer from a blues piano player to go to Germany as a guitarist for the Pointer Sisters. This led to him contributing to around 25 albums of differing styles as a session musician, before playing guitar and composing material with a Dutch "Bad Company rip-off", as he describes them, called Teaser.

ADRIAN RECORDED one eponymous album with the band in 1978, but when Teaser fell apart he immediately started putting the group Vandenberg together. After signing with Atlantic, the band released a debut album, also titled 'Vandenberg', in 1982. This is where our paths first crossed. I was an 18-year-old *Kerrang!* journalist, eager to make my name, and when the mag offered me the chance to go to Holland to interview the guitarist on the strength of a pre-release album cassette, I hopped straight on a plane.

Times were different then. The music press was all-powerful and social media hadn't been invented. The only way for new artists to gain traction was to buddy up to the mags. It's hard to imagine now, but Adrian himself picked me up from the airport at Amsterdam and I stayed at his flat with him in Enschede a couple of hours away. Despite our age difference I got along well with the 28-year-old and learned that it was Atlantic Records' UK boss Phil Carson who'd signed Vandenberg after seeing a gig in Hilversum. The line-up of Vandenberg, vocalist Bert Heerink, drummer Jos Zoomer and bassist Dick Kemper played a live rehearsal set especially for me, and I remember thinking the guitarist really had what it took.

OF COURSE I was proved right about that. The band's debut album 'Vandenberg' performed respectably and reached number 65 on the *Billboard* US charts. Even more impressively, first single 'Burning Heart' made it to number 39 in the States. The group's star waned considerably, however, on second album 'Heading For A Storm', released in 1983, and by 1985's 'Alibi' it was obvious that the band was done. But as luck would have it, Whitesnake vocalist David Coverdale had heard a tape of that first Vandenberg album at Atlantic's offices in London even before it had been released, and right from the start he'd noted Vandenberg's guitar-playing abilities.

"I remember reading an article in the UK music paper *Sounds* pretty early on where David said, 'My next guitar player's going to be an unknown guy from Holland'," Adrian told me recently. "I thought, 'Mmm, that's weird,' because that was the first I'd heard about it!"

Coverdale pursued Vandenberg relentlessly and eventually got his man in 1986. "I'd just got out of my contract with Atlantic and hooked up with John Kalodner at Geffen Records," Adrian explains. "I went to meet him at his office in LA. He said, 'I have two offers for you. The first one is a Vandenberg contract, but the condition is that you have to get rid of the rest of the band.' To be honest I could understand that, because I knew I'd kind of hit the ceiling with the existing Vandenberg line-up. So I said, 'I'll think about that. And what's the second offer?' John replied, 'I'd really like you to join Whitesnake.' I told him that idea had been mooted before. He said I should take some time to think about it, but asked if in the meantime I'd like to put together a new guitar arrangement and solo for a version of 'Here I Go Again' that was being prepared for the next Whitesnake album."

THAT ALBUM was the '1987' release and it was "pretty much finished" by then, though there was no Whitesnake band. Vandenberg recorded his stuff for 'Here I Go Again' and soon threw his lot in with Coverdale. It proved to be a wise move as Vandenberg became a lynchpin member of the group, readily embracing the hair metal image that took MTV by storm and made '1987' a multi-platinum success. "I was fine with it," he says. "I just always thought that was show business."

After the high of '1987' came the low of the follow-up, 1989's 'Slip Of The Tongue', where a wrist injury meant Vandenberg had to be replaced by Steve Vai for the recording. Adrian recuperated and returned to Whitesnake to work alongside Vai in the live arena, but grunge had started to take hold, hair metal was on its way out, and soon Coverdale moved on to work with Jimmy Page.

FOR HIS part, Vandenberg formed Manic Eden with Whitesnake alumni, drummer Tommy Aldridge and bassist Rudy Sarzo, and released an eponymous album in 1994, but returned to work with Coverdale in Whitesnake that same year. The collaboration lasted until 1998 when Coverdale again folded the band. But Vandenberg was relaxed about the break-up.

"For years I'd wanted to catch up on my painting because I really missed it, so I was fine with the break. I got back into art and did exhibitions and stuff like that."

COVERDALE AND Vandenberg are still friends, but Adrian's long musical sabbatical came to an end in 2013 when he started working on his own band, Vandenberg's MoonKings, together with vocalist Jan Hoving. The group has released three albums to date.

"I was curious to see if I could still write rock songs," says Adrian. "Because I hadn't done it in so long. But as soon as I picked up my Les Paul the tunes came rolling out again like I'd never been away.

"We did the first MoonKings album together in 2014 and we're still going strong..."

Words: Howard Johnson. Photo: IconicPix/George Chin

CLASSIC ALBUM SLEEVE

BÖC photographed in July 1976. L-R: Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser, Joe Bouchard, Allen Lanier, Eric Bloom, Albert Bouchard

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT 'AGENTS OF FORTUNE'

DATELINE: MAY 1976

Artist **Lynn Curlee** (*above right*) calls from Connecticut to explain exactly how he created this iconic and evocative cover painting.

"I WAS BORN IN North Carolina in 1947 and went to college in Virginia, which is where I first started to get interested in art history. I eventually graduated with a master's degree in the subject from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. But by that point I'd also started painting, without any formal training. I taught myself by looking very carefully at great paintings.

"A couple of years after graduating a friend of mine introduced me to the owner of an art gallery in New York City on Madison Avenue called the Christopher Gallery. The owner liked my work and gave me an exhibition in October 1973. We made some sales and so I did another show the following year, and then one the year after that.

"SOMEBODY FROM Blue Öyster Cult or maybe their management saw my paintings, because in the autumn of 1975 they came to me to ask if I'd be interested in creating a painting for their next album. I must admit, I didn't really know the band's music at all. I was into Neil Young and Joni Mitchell, and was just starting to get heavily into the emerging New York disco scene. But I was still really thrilled to get the opportunity to work on an album sleeve. I'd never done a scrap of commercial art before and I thought it was a very cool thing to do.

"I was told that the album was going to be called 'Agents Of Fortune', but that was all I had to go on – I didn't get any music to listen to. Still, the title was very evocative and it started sparking off ideas in my head. I'd always liked working with vintage photos and had a collection of clippings of images that appealed to me from newspapers and magazines. I had an old image of a magician and I thought that would work as a starting point. I did a rough sketch and sent it to the band and they were immediately on board. I agreed a fee for the work, though I can't remember how much it was, and away I went to start the painting.

"IT TOOK me about a month to produce the finished article, which measured 30 inches by 60 inches. I'd been painting for about four years at that point and was getting quite confident, but all the same the work is fairly laborious. I painted the piece using acrylics on stretched canvas. I was given free rein to do exactly what I wanted and was thrilled with how the painting turned out.

"I had to take the finished work to the band's label, Columbia Records, and was able to sit in on the session when they photographed the painting before it went to the art directors for typography work and what have you.

"EVEN THOUGH I did this cover for a commercial product I wasn't motivated to become a commercial artist, so continued with my painting. I never did anything else for Blue Öyster Cult either, but I did end up painting another rock album sleeve, the smoking angels for Black Sabbath's 'Heaven And Hell' album in 1980. I still like both paintings and I get a lot of satisfaction out of the fact that they're both still out there and people still appreciate them. I think that's great."

Check out all of Lynn's great work at www.curleeart.com.

Interview by Howard Johnson. Photo: Getty Images/Michael Putland

"I know that there has been some talk about who the magician is, and quite a few people have said they believe it's Harry Houdini, the famous illusionist. I know that Houdini did magic tricks, but I don't know whether he did card tricks. The character wasn't supposed to be Houdini, just a guy with fortune-telling cards."

"Why did I decide to set the image at night time? I can't answer that. When you start a painting you make certain decisions that are very meticulous and planned out. But then as you start getting into the detail of a painting it becomes the painting itself that starts telling you what it needs. It talks back to you. And I think it's that process that makes a great painting really come alive."

"I had nothing to do with the typography for the band name and album title. This was added to my original painting by an art director at the record company. Did I think it ruined the piece? Not at all. I was absolutely thrilled with the whole thing. I was an obscure little artist and I'd suddenly got my artwork used on a big rock album. To be honest I was on cloud nine!"

"I happened to have some tarot cards at the time and straight away thought they would be good for the painting. I thought they'd work because they were beautiful, yet evil-looking. I definitely wanted to use the death card, but the other three were just picked at random, really. The cards were originally black and white, so I had to choose the colours to use when I painted them."

"The band said that they wanted the hook and cross logo to feature somewhere on the sleeve, but they didn't give me any specific indication as to where they wanted it. They left it up to me. I decided to put it into the stonework because I was quite good at the *trompe l'oeil* technique, which is where you create the optical illusion that an object exists in three dimensions."

"I used a vintage photo that I'd cut out of a magazine as the basis for the magician. I particularly liked the pose in the photo and followed that meticulously, so the hand positions you see in the painting are exactly the same as the original. I thought that was important. The clothing was also the same, but because the original photo was black and white I obviously had to decide what colours to use for the formal wear."

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT – 'AGENTS OF FORTUNE'

Released: 21 May 1976. Album length: 36.35. Produced by David Lucas, Murray Krugman and Sandy Pearlman. Engineered by Shelly Yakus and Andy Abrams. Recorded at The Record Plant, New York City.

1. This Ain't The Summer Of Love (2.20) *– Murray Krugman/Albert Bouchard/ Don Waller*
2. True Confessions (2.55) *– Allen Lanier*
3. (Don't Fear) The Reaper (5.05) *– Donald Roeser*
4. E.T.I. (Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) (3.43) *– Donald Roeser/Sandy Pearlman*
5. The Revenge Of Vera Gemini (3.48) *– Albert Bouchard/Patti Smith*
6. Sinful Love (3.28) *– Albert Bouchard/ Helen Wheels*
7. Tattoo Vampire (2.40) *– Albert Bouchard/Helen Wheels*
8. Morning Final (4.14) *– Joe Bouchard*
9. Tenderloin (3.53) *– Allen Lanier*
10. Debbie Denise (4.12) *– Albert Bouchard/ Patti Smith*

LINE UP:
Eric Bloom – vocals, rhythm guitar, keyboards, percussion
Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser – lead guitar, vocals, synthesizer, percussion
Allen Lanier – keyboards, vocals, guitar, bass
Joe Bouchard – bass, vocals, piano
Albert Bouchard – drums, vocals, acoustic guitar, percussion, harmonica

YOU COULDN'T MAKE IT UP!

INSANE TALES FROM THE ANNALS OF ROCK

They say everything's fake in Hollywood. But this is the real Fleetwood Mac. L-R: John McVie (bass), Mick Fleetwood (drums), Bob Welch (guitar and vocals), Christine McVie (keyboards and vocals)

DATELINE: JANUARY 1974

THE CRAZY WORLD OF 'FAKEWOOD MAC'!

WHEN IS **FLEETWOOD MAC** NOT FLEETWOOD MAC? WHEN AN UNSCRUPULOUS MANAGER SENDS 'THEM' OUT ON TOUR WITHOUT A SINGLE RECOGNISED MEMBER...

THESE DAYS THE LINES between fake and real have been blurred, with rock fans often accepting substitutes for original bands or members in the live arena. In many respects people just want to hear the songs, even if they can't see the original musicians who created them. These groups are, in effect, official tribute acts and the list is getting longer with each passing year as founder members either pass away or succumb to illness or old age. Quiet Riot, Molly Hatchet, Blackfoot and Dr. Feelgood immediately spring to mind as groups where original members are at a premium, but others are sailing close to the wind too.

In many respects it's the sad process of growing older, yet it's still thrilling to know that you can go to a live show, relive the glory years of rock, and experience live versions of great songs first hand.

The concept of a tribute act isn't exactly new, however, though sometimes they've happened as a direct result of underhand machinations. If we flick back to 1974 we'll find one of the first and most bizarre cases of rock imposters, a British band 'impersonating' the original Fleetwood Mac.

THE MAC – managed at the time by Clifford Davis, a man well known on the UK blues circuit – was in complete disarray at this point. Three guitarists – Peter Green, Danny Kirwan and Jeremy Spencer – had bailed in quick succession. Davies decided to put together a US tour

Words by Derek Oliver. Photos: Getty Images/Michael Ochs Archives; Getty Images/Walt Disney Television

for early '74 to help glue the band together and make some money. But a spanner was thrown in the works when three of the four Mac members – rhythm guitarist Bob Welch, vocalist and keyboardist Christine McVie, and her bass-playing husband John – said they weren't ready to return to live performing at that point.

Fakewood Mac, aka Stretch. L-R: Paul Martinez (bass), Graham 'Kirby' Gregory (guitar), Elmer Gantry (vocals, guitar)

"We all got letters from Clifford Davis indicating his intentions to put the band back on the road," Bob Welch told *Rolling Stone* magazine at the time. "He issued an ultimatum to all of us." For his part, Davies claimed he had every right to put a new band together under the Fleetwood Mac banner if the current members didn't want to perform.

"This band is my band. This band has always been my band," he insisted. Davies quickly put together a new version of Fleetwood Mac that was to all intents and purposes simply another one of his acts, a band called Legs that would later become Stretch. The group's guitarist, Graham 'Kirby' Gregory, had previously been in Curved Air.

The genuine Mac performing in 1974. L-R; John McVie, Bob Welch, Mick Fleetwood

Drummer Mick Fleetwood seemed to be the only 'real' Fleetwood Mac member who was up for it. According to *Rolling Stone*, he flew to the States on 13 January 1974 to start the two and a half month tour, but turned around and flew back to England the next day. The story went that Fleetwood was not in a good place, having discovered the previous year that his wife was having an affair with 'real' Mac guitarist at that time, Bob Western. After Fleetwood's last-minute change of heart, drummer Craig Collinge stepped in to fill the breach.

UNSURPRISINGLY, THE new Fleetwood Mac immediately ran into problems when the people who turned out to see them realised that this wasn't in any way a valid version of the band. It didn't feature Mick Fleetwood, or indeed *any other* legitimate Mac member.

Matters came to a head when the band played the Academy in New York City on 26 January supported, amazingly, by Kiss and Silverhead. The bogus Mac's vocalist Elmer Gantry (real name Dave Terry, previously of '60s psych rockers Velvet Opera) completely lost his voice and refused to go on stage. Manager Davis insisted that the show should go on and promptly instructed the band to jam as an instrumental unit. It was, of course, a complete disaster. The audience was not only bemused, but also downright affronted by this manoeuvre.

THE REAL Fleetwood Mac eventually won back the legal rights to the name, leading them to repair their career and move permanently to the US. And of course we all know what happened to them after Bob Welch quit at the end of 1974. American duo Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham joined at the start of 1975 and Fleetwood Mac was on its way to mega stardom.

As Stretch, members of the bogus Mac (Gantry, 'Kirby' and bassist Paul Martinez), eventually scored a record deal in their own right and recorded the hit single 'Why Did You Do It', a song that grew in stature after it was used in the 1998 British gangster movie *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels*. The lyrics, written by Kirby, were supposedly a barbed comment on Mick Fleetwood's refusal to tour with them in Fleetwood Mac.

As an aside to this bizarre tale, I remember seeing Stretch support Rainbow at London's Hammersmith Odeon in September of 1976 and, I tell no lie, they almost blew the headliners off stage. They were actually called back for an encore that night, finally convincing a rock public sceptical about the 'Fakewood Mac' fiasco that they were a true band with legitimate talent. ☠

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

BIZARRE MEETINGS WITH BIZARRE ROCK STARS...

'Righteous' Joey DeMaio conjures up some ear-melting 'Black Wind'

MANOWAR

Dave Reynolds takes us back to 1994 when he risked his hearing (and his sanity) watching **Manowar** attempt to officially become the world's loudest band...

FOR ALL THEIR 'DEATH to False Metal' bluster and overtly macho imagery, I always enjoyed my encounters with Manowar during my time with both *Metal Forces* and *Kerrang!* I had the sense that, secretly, they never took themselves all that seriously, despite the deadpan front they put up. Bassist Joey DeMaio and vocalist Eric Adams in particular were great company and could always be relied on for some brilliant copy. So an invitation for the late, great *K!* photographer Ray Palmer and me to witness the New York-based quartet – also featuring guitarist Dave Shankle and drummer Rhino at the time – attempting to retake the mantle of World's Loudest Band was something I couldn't turn down.

Manowar had already held the title in 1984, but had lost it to a bunch of "small-time creeps" (DeMaio's description) called Immaculate Mary when that band blew the roof off the House Of Guitars in Rochester, New York back in 1988.

ON TUESDAY 8 March 1994, Ray and I find ourselves in the cavernous Musikhalle, a venue located inside a former wartime U-Boat building facility on an industrial site in Hanover, Germany. It's three thirty in the afternoon and Manowar's tour manager Tom Miller gives a very dramatic one-minute warning. He orders all non-working personnel to leave the area. The rest of us must ensure we have the standard-issue neon green earplugs securely in place. Manowar's four Kings of Metal take to the stage in front of us. Quite ludicrously, they're wearing their full stage gear for the attempt, despite the fact that there are only a handful of people in the hall! Unfortunately, though, they're all dressed in plain old black leather, having long moved on from the animal fur loincloths of old. I can't help but feel a twinge of disappointment.

PAYING SCANT heed to any sensible medical advice, Manowar launch headlong into 'Black Wind, Fire and Steel' from 1987's 'Fighting The World' album, hoping this piece of heavy metal thunder will give them the necessary volume to regain their crown. We all hold our breath. Have they done it?

Earplugs or no earplugs, I'm fairly sure I heard the band play louder the first time they ever played at Hammersmith Odeon on 12 March 1984, when they initially claimed the world record! Thinking about it, Kiss playing at Wembley in 1988 was so painfully loud it was almost unbearable (*Are you sure that wasn't just the music? – Ed*). Still, TV cameramen crowd around the two sound experts who've been brought in to verify exactly how much 'Black Wind' Manowar are producing here. One of them is Germany's top man in this field, so I have full confidence in his monitoring abilities. We don't have to wait too long for the verdict. Manowar register a record-breaking 129.5 decibels! Just for context, a Boeing 747 registers 140 decibels on take-off!

JOEY AND Eric are all smiles back in the dressing room. They've broken the World Record before, but this time it's official. They have their crown back! "When we did it at Hammersmith a few years ago, it wasn't officially recorded," says Eric. "This time we had two guys with measuring equipment to ensure that they were both getting the same readings..."

"OUR FANS have made us the Kings of Metal, so this is our way of claiming the crown," DeMaio tells MTV. And how does Joey feel about becoming the world's undisputed Loudest Individual Musician?

"Righteous!" he responds. "Pardon?" I say...

Photo: Getty Images/Mick Hutson

MY FIRST GIG

DATELINE: 29 SEPTEMBER 1980, BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND

"I WAS ALMOST FLOATING!"

BLACK STAR RIDERS AND CURRENT **THIN LIZZY** FRONTMAN **RICKY WARWICK** RECALLS THE TRANSCENDENTAL MOMENT WHEN HE WITNESSED STIFF LITTLE FINGERS IN HIS HOMETOWN OF BELFAST

"I HAD THE STIFF Little Fingers 1979 album 'Inflammable Material' before I ever saw a gig and it was a game-changer. I'd never heard anything like it. I asked myself, 'Who are these people?' Then I found out they were from Belfast, where I came from! I'd been used to listening to English punk bands like The Clash and the Sex Pistols, but suddenly there was a group from round our way that sounded every bit as good. That felt incredible.

"Somebody from my school got tickets for an SLF show at Ulster Hall in 1980 and even though I was determined to go I didn't dare tell my mum and dad. At the age of 13 you just didn't go to the centre of Belfast at night, given that this was when The Troubles were still happening! So on the evening of the show I came home from school and made up a lie about going to a friend's house, then jumped on the bus to town. I was terrified!

"THE ULSTER Hall held about 2000 people and was a prestigious venue. When I got there I was way more scared of the punks standing outside with their Mohicans than I was of any paramilitaries. But all the same it felt amazing to be part of this crowd. Music was one of the few things in Northern Ireland that wasn't sectarian. It didn't matter if you were Protestant or Catholic – music was totally unifying and religion was never discussed.

"HONESTLY, WHEN Stiff Little Fingers were on stage that night I felt like I was dreaming. The energy coming off the stage was off the scale and the entire place was going ballistic, I was somehow almost floating. It was as if the band was playing just for me, standing there on my own with my jaw on the floor. I kept asking myself, 'How can this be real? How can they sound like this?' I remember feeling totally euphoric and totally happy.

"I don't remember too many specifics about the show, though I know the band played their two biggest songs, 'Alternative Ulster' and 'At The Edge'. But I do recollect walking out of the Ulster Hall a different person to the one who'd walked in. I told myself I needed to be doing what *they* were doing. It was a eureka moment, for sure.

"I ALREADY had a little acoustic guitar and had taken three or four lessons, but I'd hated it. My fingers hurt and I couldn't understand the instrument. That night I decided that I needed an electric guitar. I was doing a paper round delivering *The Belfast Telegraph* at the time. My dad said if I saved half the money for a guitar then he'd match it, and in the end we bought a cheap electric guitar from the music shop in the town where I lived, Newtownards. It was a tiny little Vox with a 10 watt practice amp, but I was away.

"I WAS back home by around 10.30 after the gig, so my parents never knew where I'd been. I only told them about 25 years later when I started talking about the gig in interviews. I thought they might read about it, so decided I'd better own up! I eventually became friends with SLF frontman Jake Burns and in 2011 I played 'Alternative Ulster' with Stiff Little Fingers on the same stage where I'd seen my first gig all those years ago. That was a very emotional moment for me, I can tell you."

Ricky's latest album with Black Star Riders titled 'Another State Of Grace' is out now on Nuclear Blast

Interview by Howard Johnson. Photos: Getty Images/Kevin Nixon/Guitarist Magazine/Future; Getty Images/Virginia Turbett/Redferns

COFFEE TABLE ROCK BOOKS

WHEN REAL CARE AND ATTENTION GOES INTO THEIR PRODUCTION THESE WORKS BECOME BEAUTIFUL COLLECTORS' ITEMS...

HURT
and LIFE
SIXX
ROCK
COVERS
TASCHEN
Ronnie James Dio
120
121
123
124
DEEP PURPLE
ONTARIO MOTOR SPEEDWAY
SATURDAY
APRIL 6, 1974
BERNIE
MARSDEN
Tales of Tone
and Volume
BERNIE MARSDEN
SWEET
VERSARY LIMITED EDITION
CK SABBATH
+ DIO + YEARS
A Photographic History
THE ULTIMATE
METALLICA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ROSS HALFIN
FOREWORD BY LARS ULRICH
AFTERWORD BY KIRK HAMMETT
LED ZEPPELIN

WEATHERING THE STORM

UK classic rock band **Thunder** have had their fair share of ups and downs over the course of a 30-year career. But as their 'Greatest Hits' album proves, the quality of their music has never been in doubt. *Howard Johnson* catches up with guitarist **Luke Morley** to discuss three decades of a band that has always stuck to its guns...

IF YOU WORKED IN rock music in England in the late '80s and early '90s, then you knew Luke Morley. And because you knew Luke Morley, then you knew about his band, Thunder. The guitarist had a reputation back then as London's King Ligger, the man you'd always bump into at any gig, any booze-up, any function. It became something of a standing joke when I was working at *Kerrang!* magazine. Wherever you went, there Luke would be, a grin spread across his face, a beer in his hand. Somehow, it was strangely reassuring.

"I've always been a social creature," laughs Luke when I ask him about his days as the ace face on the London rock scene. "I was young, free and single and wanted to enjoy myself. Plus I found the whole music industry fascinating."

So were you working the room whenever you were out, acting as a walking billboard for Thunder?

"It definitely wasn't that cynical," he laughs again. "But maybe it did help grease the wheels. Though I'd like to think that Thunder did well because we were a good band, rather than because I was a good bloke to have a couple of beers with!"

I think we can safely say that's true. After all, you don't get a UK gold disc for your debut album just because people like hanging out with you. And as Morley sagely adds... "I probably vomited on a few people along the way after drinking too much too, so that might have worked against us, actually!"

I don't think it did. In addition to UK success Thunder shifted a cool 250,000 copies of that 1990 debut album, 'Backstreet Symphony', in the US without ever really supporting the record with significant dates over there. We'll get to why that was the case later. And the band – now comprising Morley, vocalist Danny Bowes, drummer Gary 'Harry' James, guitarist/keyboardist Ben Matthews and bassist Chris Childs – is still active today, which is testament to the affection in which they're held by a sizeable number of hard rock fans.

> "WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN JEANS AND T-SHIRTS RATHER THAN SPANDEX AND HAIRSPRAY. WE'VE NEVER BEEN PARTICULARLY GLAMOROUS AND WE'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO PRESENT OURSELVES AS THE PEOPLE WE WERE."

IT'S NOT hard to see why Thunder are so popular. They have a refreshingly open, down-to-earth attitude ("I always thought we had a lot in common with Status Quo in terms of attitude, if not music," says Morley) and their music, which is equally unpretentious, sits comfortably in the classic British rock canon.

"We've always been an English rock'n'roll band in the spirit of Free, Bad Company, Led Zeppelin and The Who," says Morley. "We've always been jeans and T-shirts rather than Spandex and hairspray. We've never been particularly glamorous and we've always wanted to present ourselves as the people we were. Phil Collins once said there's no point in convincing someone you're an arsehole if you're not. Well, I hope we're not arseholes! We always wanted to be accessible to our fans. We started doing meet and greets right from the start when there were only three people who actually wanted to meet us! But in the long run it's served us well."

Such a grounded attitude probably stems from the fact that, as Morley himself admits, the band weren't kids when Thunder first formed. The guitarist was 29 years old when Thunder came together in 1989, having already been around the block once or twice. Together with his childhood friend Danny Bowes – they've known each other since they were both 11 years old – Morley had already had a crack at rock'n'roll fame with a band called Terraplane. But the project had come to an ignominious end.

"We were signed to a major label, Epic, and released two albums [1985's 'Black And White' and 1987's 'Moving Target']. But while Epic was a great pop label, the people there really didn't understand rock. That became increasingly difficult and we got frustrated with them. We suspected we were in the wrong place."

That suspicion was comprehensively confirmed when Bowes and Morley went on a "fact-finding mission" to the States in 1988.

Photo: IconicPix/George Chin

Thunder photographed in London, 22 June 1992. L-R: Danny Bowes (vocals), Luke Morley (guitar), Gary 'Harry' James (drums), Mark 'Snake' Luckhurst (bass), Ben Matthews (guitar/keyboards)

THUNDER

Thunder performing at Castle Donington Monsters Of Rock, 18 August 1990

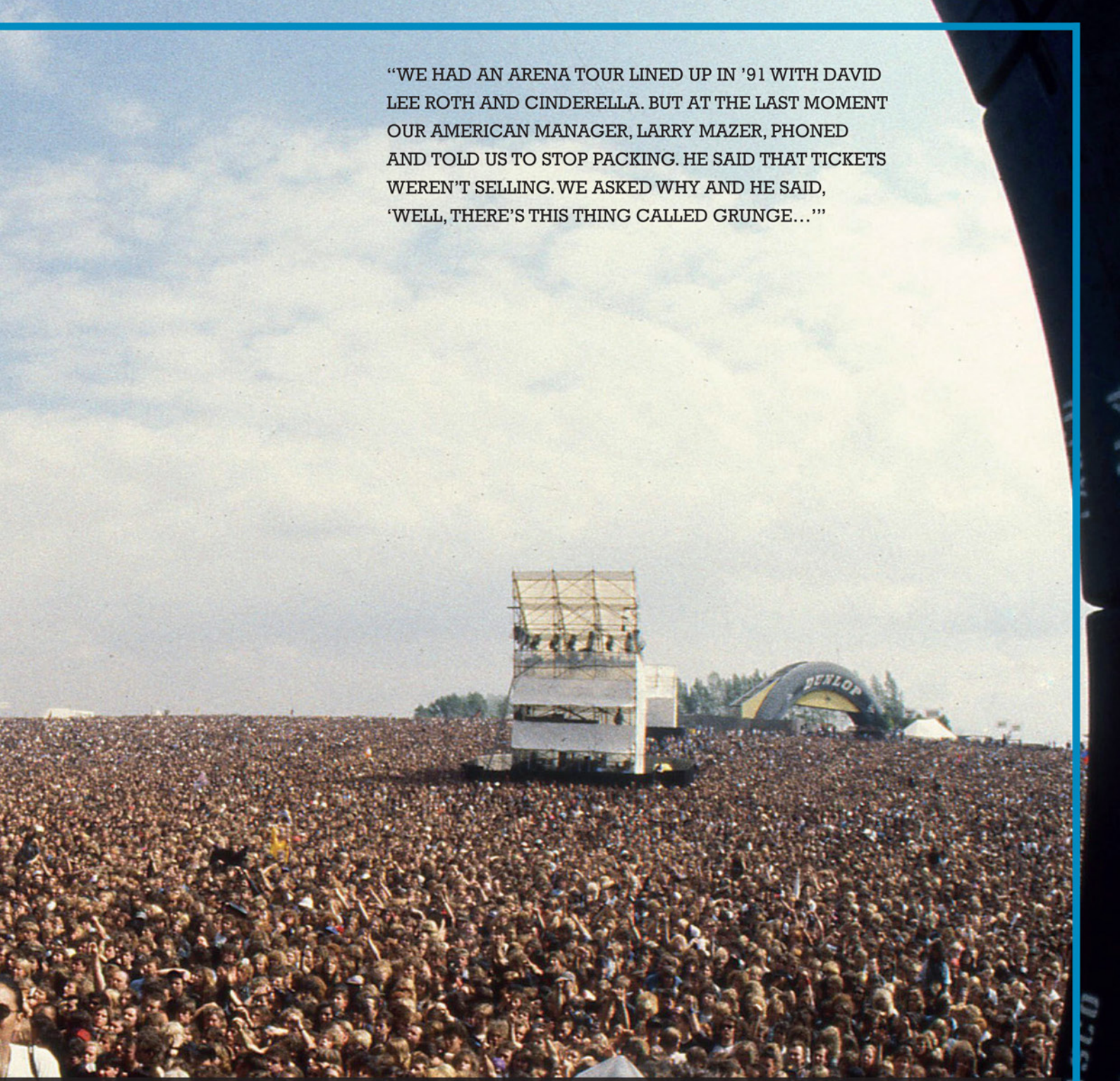
"We met and spoke with a lot of people to try to find out what was going on in a country that was genuinely rock-oriented," says Luke. "In the previous couple of years there had been a lot of hair metal that was very poppy, and that didn't appeal. But on that trip I first got to hear Guns N' Roses – and that was a bit of a eureka moment. Not that we wanted to sound like them, but they were playing really good rock'n'roll, which wasn't at all schmaltzy. You could hear in the grooves that the music came from the heart, it wasn't manufactured. We came back to England from that trip really energised, convinced that we had to make the music we felt in our hearts and that we had to live or die by it. After all, we'd already failed abysmally with music we didn't want to play! It all felt like it was finally making sense. We finally knew what we needed to do."

BOWES AND Morley immediately folded Terraplane and started Thunder, recruiting drummer Harry James from their previous band and adding guitarist/keyboardist Ben Matthews and bassist Mark 'Snake' Luckhurst. They had a couple of songs Morley had written, including one called 'Dirty Love', but that was about it. A manager, Malcolm McKenzie, was recruited, and then a chance encounter really set them on their way.

"I met [former Duran Duran guitarist] Andy Taylor by chance through an accountant we both shared." Not very rock'n'roll, I laugh. "Actually it was *very* rock'n'roll. That accountant allegedly ended up running off with tons of [Pink Floyd keyboardist] Rick Wright's money! Anyway, this guy told me that Andy Taylor was a client of his, that he'd just moved back from America and was looking for a young rock band to produce. I loved the Power Station album that Andy had done with Robert Palmer in '85, so I was very interested in the idea of working with him."

When they got together Taylor merely confirmed what Morley was already thinking, that Thunder needed to be a lot more rock'n'roll and a lot less quirky than Terraplane

Photo: IconicPix/George Bodnar Archive



"WE HAD AN ARENA TOUR LINED UP IN '91 WITH DAVID LEE ROTH AND CINDERELLA. BUT AT THE LAST MOMENT OUR AMERICAN MANAGER, LARRY MAZER, PHONED AND TOLD US TO STOP PACKING. HE SAID THAT TICKETS WEREN'T SELLING. WE ASKED WHY AND HE SAID, 'WELL, THERE'S THIS THING CALLED GRUNGE…'"

had been. The two musicians promised to work together, though the band still needed a record deal.

"We got a small piece written about us in one of the music papers and the next thing you know we were getting calls from major record labels," says Luke. "Our timing was good, because the success of Guns N' Roses had made rock fashionable in London for a short period of time. Labels were looking for bands. The Quireboys and Little Angels had both signed major deals, so when we did a small showcase in a rehearsal room we had EMI, Phonogram and, I think, Warner Bros. all wanting to sign the band." Morley always had a penchant for EMI…

"They already had a good rock roster with Iron Maiden and Marillion, and as soon as we met some of the staff there we felt that they really got what we were about. There was a marketing guy, Mike Andrews, who was a real dynamo. He understood that we'd need serious support to tour, because we weren't going to get mainstream media, and that impressed us. And the guy who signed us, Nick Gatfield… frankly he got the chequebook out! He was about to go off on holiday and really wanted to sign the band, so he sat down and wrote out a cheque for £250,000 there and then! We had a really great relationship with EMI for the first three years, actually."

WITH AN enthusiastic major label behind them as well as a name producer, the band began recording their debut album at a country pile – Great Linford Manor in Milton Keynes – as was the fashion at the time. Ramping up the support team, Thunder also brought in respected engineer Mike Fraser.

"When Danny and I were in the States in '88 we heard Aerosmith's 'Dude (Looks Like A Lady)' and we both thought it was fantastic. We knew Andy Taylor was going to produce the first album, but we thought it was very important that we got Mike Fraser, who'd engineered that Aerosmith song. We sent him our demos before we even had a deal. We said, 'We're close to getting ►

THUNDER

a label and we want you to come to England to engineer our first album.' He said, 'I love the demos. I'm on my way.' Mike's one of the great rock mix engineers and makes records sound fantastic, like the band is right there in the room with you. We're still mates today, actually."

Fraser wasn't the only one in the Aerosmith camp who took to Thunder, though. Once 'Backstreet Symphony' had been released in March of 1990, the band found themselves opening shows for Aerosmith.

"Steven Tyler came into our dressing room at one gig and asked who'd written a song called 'Don't Wait For Me' that was on the first album. When I said that it was me he told me what a cool tune he thought it was. That was nice."

Luke gives it some onstage guitar hero

"PEOPLE KEPT BUYING THE ALBUMS AND COMING TO THE GIGS, SO WE WERE FAIRLY BULLETPROOF. WE KNEW THE AUDIENCE WAS THERE AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM HAS ALWAYS BEEN CRUCIAL."

NOT EVERYONE was a Thunder fan, though. Despite things starting to build nicely in the UK, the band suddenly hit a brick wall in the US. They'd shifted 250,000 US copies of 'Backstreet Symphony' on the back of extensive MTV support for the 'Dirty Love' single, but the band's American label Capitol, part of the EMI group, suddenly went cold on Thunder.

"We went to do two showcases in the States," explains Luke. "One in New York, one in LA. New York went well, but when we played in LA at the Roxy the recently-installed head of Capitol came up to our manager and said, 'I'm sorry, but I just don't see it with these guys.' That was us f*cked with Capitol, basically."

Luckily for Thunder, though, Axl Rose, David Coverdale and Steven Tyler had been talking about Thunder to their label, Geffen...

"Next thing you know, we're on a plane to LA, where Geffen made us an offer. We were signed to EMI out of London for the world, but we went and begged the label to let us go for North America, given that Capitol weren't going to support us. Eventually they agreed." And that was that. It should have all been hunky dory.

"We had an arena tour lined up in '91 with David Lee Roth and Cinderella," says Luke. "But at the last moment our American manager, Larry Mazer, phoned and told us to stop packing. He said that tickets weren't selling. We asked why and he said, 'Well, there's this thing called grunge...' America had discovered its own version of punk and while our A&R guy, John Kalodner, was still really behind the band, suddenly Geffen as a company cooled their interest in us. The marketing department wouldn't fund tours, so while we could have paid to go over and tour in the US ourselves, we would certainly have lost a lot of money. It would have been a big risk. Maybe we made the wrong decision, but at the end of the day we said, 'If you're not paying, then we're not coming.'"

THUNDER'S ASSAULT on America stalled on the starting line.

"The thing was, we did one show in Hollywood with a bill featuring us, Spinal Tap, Soundgarden, Pearl Jam and Alice In Chains. It was very peculiar, but I watched the grunge bands and thought, 'It's just f*cking rock.' I was bemused by this huge divide that seemed to suddenly

Ben and Luke share a joke

Vocalist Danny Bowes performing at the Hammersmith Odeon, London, 14 October 1992

exist. To me Soundgarden were just like Sabbath."

Fortunately for Thunder, though, there was enough interest in the band in the UK, Europe and Japan that their US woes didn't prove fatal to their career prospects.

"There was enough happening in other territories for us to make a good living out of the band," confirms Luke. "So we mustn't grumble. But had we been able to work hard in America I think we would have done well. Thunder's a great live band and that's important in the US. But our timing there couldn't have been worse."

Thunder produced two more albums for EMI, 1992's 'Laughing On Judgement Day' and 'Behind Closed Doors' in 1995, before the vagaries of fashion did for them with the major label. And despite continuing to release music, the band decided to split in 1999.

"People kept buying the albums and coming to the gigs, so we were fairly bulletproof," assesses Luke. "We knew the audience was there and our relationship with them has always been crucial. But when we stopped in '99 it was out of frustration more than anything else, because we couldn't see a way of really growing the band."

THE RISE of social media in the noughties, together with the possibilities this presented to bands who'd built themselves a sizeable following on the back of major label money in previous decades, meant that Thunder came back together in 2002. They figured they could finally move the band forward again with these new tools at their disposal – and they were proved right.

"You have a colossal incentive to make it work when you're doing it yourself," says Luke. "Plus you don't have to sell as many albums to make more money. Given that most people who come to see Thunder will buy a physical product, we could clearly see a way forward for the band."

Despite another hiatus between 2009 and 2014 (barring the odd show just for the hell of it) when vocalist Danny Bowes decided to develop his skills as a music business agent, Thunder have since gone from strength to strength, rocking to their own rhythm, releasing albums, playing shows and remaining financially comfortable. And perhaps bizarrely, things have also come full circle with the band recently signing to another major label, BMG.

"I signed a publishing deal with BMG last year," explains Luke. "But when I told them that Thunder was planning a compilation album they really wanted to put it out. We had a couple of other offers, but when BMG made their bid they also wanted a new album from us. We were going to do one anyway, so it all made sense.

"Calling the compilation 'Greatest Hits' is a bit ironic," laughs Luke. "But I had a great time curating the album."

It's a timely reminder of how much good, varied rock music Thunder have produced over the course of their long career and it makes for a great listen. But despite being proud of Thunder's past, Morley always has an eye on the future. "I've always felt the need to push forward," he says. "Maybe our best album hasn't been recorded yet, you know?"

So there's definitely a future for Thunder in 2019?

"If the audience is still there, then there's no reason why not. Apart from if the odd limb falls off, that is..."

Photos: IconicPix/George Chin

Messrs Perry and Tyler rocking the sh*t out of 'Permanent Vacation' in 1987

When **Aerosmith** entered the studio in 1987 to record 'Permanent Vacation', there was a huge amount riding on it. *Malcolm Dome* talks to album engineer **Mike Fraser** (*right*) to find out what it was like to be part of the process...

THE MAKING OF AEROSMITH'S 'PERMANENT VACATION'

WHEN AEROSMITH STARTED WORK on their ninth studio album, 'Permanent Vacation', in March of 1987, nobody knew for certain whether the band had any commercial future at all. Steaming out of Boston with their eponymous debut album in 1973, the self-confessed bad boys had risen to become one of America's biggest bands of the decade. But success had come with a price attached. Drugs and bitter in-fighting had turned Aerosmith into a band that could barely function. Guitarists Joe Perry and Brad Whitford quit and the 1982 album Aerosmith made with replacements Jimmy Crespo and Rick Dufay, 'Rock In A Hard Place', didn't even make the US Top 30.

Whitford and Perry returned to the fold in 1984 and the rejuvenation of the classic 'Smith line-up persuaded Geffen Records A&R guru John Kalodner to sign the band. Kalodner had the magic touch, but not even he could save the band's first Geffen release, 1985's 'Done With Mirrors', from being a commercial disappointment.

Aerosmith's redemption started in the most unlikely of places when a 1986 collaboration with rappers Run DMC on an old Tyler/Perry number, 'Walk This Way', yielded a major hit. But it could easily have been seen as nothing more than a novelty record, a one-off swan song from a band that was no longer relevant. Kalodner knew the next album was do or die for Aerosmith, and he was damned if he was going to let the band write all their own material as they had on 'Done With Mirrors'. He insisted that Tyler and Perry collaborate with more commercial rock writers with a hit-making track record, including Desmond Child, Holly Knight and Jim Vallance. He also put Aerosmith together with producer Bruce Fairbairn, who'd had enormous success in '86 with Bon Jovi's 'Slippery When Wet'.

> "WHEN THE BAND CAME DOWN TO LITTLE MOUNTAIN THEY'D BEEN SOBER FOR SIX MONTHS AND THERE WAS NEVER A TIME WHEN THEY WERE EVEN TEMPTED TO FALL OFF THE WAGON. I RECALL STEVEN TELLING ME THAT HE'D REALLY ENJOYED THE RECORDING PROCESS FOR 'PERMANENT VACATION' BECAUSE NOW HE WAS CLEAN HE COULD ACTUALLY REMEMBER EVERYTHING!"

'Permanent Vacation' didn't sound like anything Aerosmith had recorded before. It was brighter, shiny, more radio-friendly. And yet the genius of the record was that it somehow still managed to hang on to the essence of the band. Songs like 'Rag Doll' and 'Dude (Looks Like A Lady)' still had that good old Aerosmith rock'n'roll swing that had so captivated rock fans the previous decade. Yet they also had an undoubtedly more commercial sheen. The combination proved to be a winning one. 'Permanent Vacation' went on to sell over five million copies in the US and in the process helped Aerosmith reinvent themselves as a rock band that could not only survive the MTV-dominated '80s, but also prosper.

Canadian producer Mike Fraser was starting out on what would become a glittering career when he worked as an engineer on 'Permanent Vacation'. He was happy to give *Rock Candy Mag* an insight into the making of this particular monster...

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME A STUDIO ENGINEER, AND WHAT PROJECTS HAD YOU WORKED ON PRIOR TO 'PERMANENT VACATION'?

"Well, I started as the janitor at Little Mountain Studios in Vancouver. I would clean the floor and do things like that. At the time the studio really concentrated on jingles and I started helping out with those. But at night when the studio was officially shut Bob Rock, who was already an engineer there, would bring in local punk bands to record, and I got to help him. I was working 22 hours a day at that point. By the time 'Permanent Vacation' came along I'd already been involved in the studio with Loverboy [on their eponymous debut album from 1980], Bryan Adams [on 1984's 'Reckless'] and on 'The Blitz' by Krokus [also in 1984]."

HOW DID YOU GET THE AEROSMITH JOB, THEN?

"[Producer] Bruce Fairbairn, Bob Rock and I had become something of a team by the time this Aerosmith project came around. I was based at Little Mountain as well. So I guess that's why Bruce wanted me involved, which was a big break for me."

WHY DID THEY DECIDE TO RECORD AT LITTLE MOUNTAIN STUDIOS?

"Bruce loved working there, because it was one of the best equipped studios around. He'd done a lot of albums at Little Mountain, so would have strongly urged the band to use it. And I was very happy, because I'd been there for quite a while and knew the facilities extremely well. Aerosmith ended up really liking Little Mountain."

YOU AND BOB ROCK BOTH WORKED AS ENGINEERS ON 'PERMANENT VACATION'. HOW DID THAT SITUATION PAN OUT?

"In reality, when we began work on the album I was no more than Bob's assistant. He'd get to do all the serious engineering work, while I made the coffee and made sure there were no microphone cables lying around the studio. But Bob was also in a band called The Payolas [who'd just changed their name to Rock And Hyde], and they were fairly successful. Not long after we began recording with Aerosmith Bob told us that his band had been booked on a major Canadian tour, and therefore he wouldn't be able to complete work on the album. That was to be a big break for me, because Bruce simply elevated me to become the overall engineer. It was very exciting, because it was the first time I'd ever had a proper credit as the engineer on any album."

HOW WAS BRUCE FAIRBAIRN TO WORK WITH?

"Bruce [who died in 1999] was a joy to work with. He was super meticulous and a great producer."

DID YOU HEAR ANY DEMOS BEFORE AEROSMITH PITCHED UP IN VANCOUVER?

"I guess they would have sent tapes through to Bruce, but I wasn't involved with that side of things. Bruce and the band would certainly have had discussions about the songs. However, there would have been no need for me to know about all that."

WAS THERE MUCH PRE-PRODUCTION WORK?

"As far as I can recall we didn't do any. I know Bruce flew up to Boston to meet with the guys and so there might well have been some pre-production work done at that time."

Main photo: Getty Images/George De Sota/Redferns

EYEWITNESS Dateline: March 1987

Aerosmith photographed at the MTV Video Music Awards 1988 where 'Dude (Looks Like A Lady)' was nominated for Best Group Video. L-R: Joe Perry (guitar), Steven Tyler (vocals), Joey Kramer (drums), Tom Hamilton (bass), Brad Whitford (guitar)

DID GEFFEN GIVE YOU ANY GUIDELINES AS TO WHAT THEY WANTED?

"The label really left it up to the band together with Bruce, Bob and me. There were probably talks between Bruce and John Kalodner, but in general Geffen never interfered in the recording process."

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION OF AEROSMITH IN THE STUDIO?

"They were great. I was a big fan, but had never met them before. I do recall that Steven and Joe came down to the studio at the start of the process and walked in wearing these duster coats, looking every inch like true rock stars. It was a really amazing moment, because I was thinking, 'This is Aerosmith, and they look *exactly* how I hoped they would. And now I'm gonna get the chance to work with them!'"

GIVEN THE STATE OF THEIR CAREER AT THE TIME, WAS THERE ANY SENSE THAT AEROSMITH WERE IN THE LAST CHANCE SALOON?

"Not at all. On the contrary, everyone believed the band was going through a resurgence and there was a real bounce in everybody's step. The general feeling was that Aerosmith could be successful in the late '80s. They just needed to make the right album to make it happen."

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE BAND WERE WORKING WITH OUTSIDE WRITERS?

"Oh yes, we all knew they'd been doing that. I suspect that Kalodner and Bruce were heavily involved in that decision – and it was a very sensible one. How can you go wrong when you're writing with people like Jim Vallance and Desmond Child? They were right at the top of their game and they helped bring an extra commercial frisson to the band. But those collaborations weren't done out of desperation. It was more that Aerosmith wanted to do whatever was necessary to ensure the album was a big seller."

SO WERE ALL THE SONGS WRITTEN BEFORE RECORDING BEGAN?

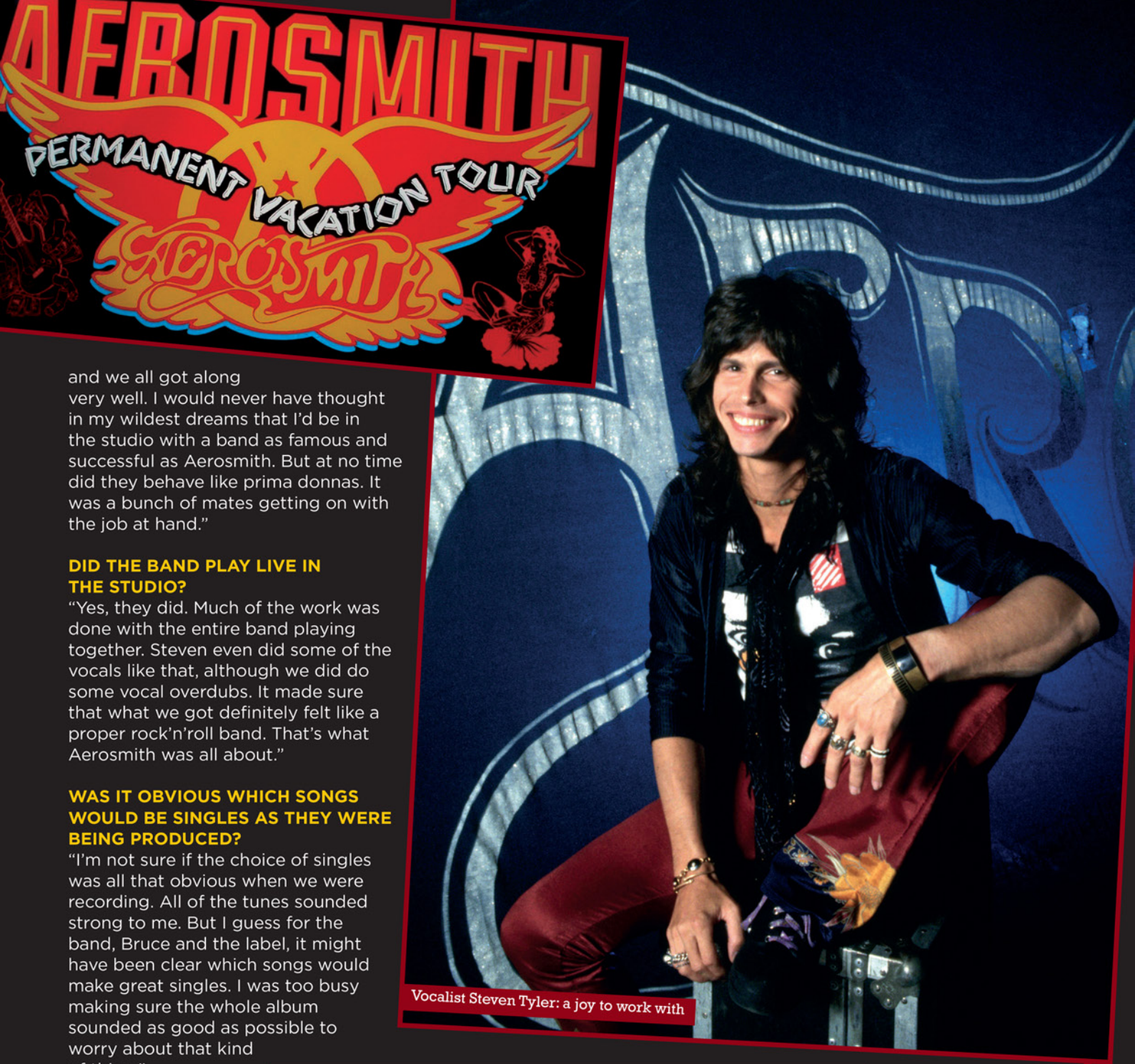
"Everything was fully written and prepared before we started. Bruce wouldn't have it any other way. He always insisted that the bands he worked with were fully ready to record, and that meant not being distracted by having to write songs as they went along. The band knew all the songs inside out and were very well prepared. If they hadn't been, then I suspect Bruce would have postponed the whole process."

WAS THERE ALWAYS A PLAN TO COVER THE BEATLES' 'I'M DOWN'?

"That was one of the last songs chosen for the album, but the band really wanted to do it. There was never any pressure on them to do a cover. They just loved the song and so they went for it. Bruce was also keen for them to record a version, and everyone was on the same page. It turned out really well."

WHAT WAS THE MOOD LIKE DURING RECORDING?

"There was a positive, fun vibe throughout the project,



Vocalist Steven Tyler: a joy to work with

and we all got along very well. I would never have thought in my wildest dreams that I'd be in the studio with a band as famous and successful as Aerosmith. But at no time did they behave like prima donnas. It was a bunch of mates getting on with the job at hand."

DID THE BAND PLAY LIVE IN THE STUDIO?
"Yes, they did. Much of the work was done with the entire band playing together. Steven even did some of the vocals like that, although we did do some vocal overdubs. It made sure that what we got definitely felt like a proper rock'n'roll band. That's what Aerosmith was all about."

WAS IT OBVIOUS WHICH SONGS WOULD BE SINGLES AS THEY WERE BEING PRODUCED?
"I'm not sure if the choice of singles was all that obvious when we were recording. All of the tunes sounded strong to me. But I guess for the band, Bruce and the label, it might have been clear which songs would make great singles. I was too busy making sure the whole album sounded as good as possible to worry about that kind of thing."

HOW EASY OR HARD WAS THE GENERAL RECORDING PROCESS? WERE CERTAIN SONGS TOUGHER TO RECORD THAN OTHER ONES?
"Everything went so smoothly, it was amazing. There were no songs that I look back on now and feel we had to work especially hard at getting right. That was part of the incredible way this album went. We never hit a real problem. Everything flowed, and that's because we all knew what we were doing and what was expected. It was a true team effort."

WAS THERE A FUN VIBE IN THE STUDIO?
"Absolutely. From the moment Steven and Joe first came down to the time when the entire mix was finished, we all had smiles on our faces. There were no stresses or strains. No pressure. We all just got on with things. What happened in that studio was just pure magic."

"WE WANTED TO GET THE SOUND OF KILLER WHALES TO OPEN UP THE SONG 'HEART'S DONE TIME'. WE WENT ALONG TO THE LOCAL AQUARIUM AND ASKED IF WE COULD RECORD THE KILLER WHALES THEY HAD DOWN THERE. THEY ALLOWED US IN FOR 30 MINUTES ONE DAY AFTER THEY'D SHUT."

HOW DID YOU GET ALONG WITH THE BAND MEMBERS ON A DAILY BASIS?
"Just fine. I got on with all five of them. I can't recall that I was closer to any one band member than any other. I had a good relationship with all of them."

WERE AEROSMITH CLEAN IN THE STUDIO?
"Yes, they were. When the band came down to Little Mountain they'd been sober for six months and there was never a time when they were even tempted to fall off the wagon. I recall Steven telling me

Photos: Getty Images/Ron Galella; Tony Mottram

that he'd really enjoyed the recording process for 'Permanent Vacation' because now he was clean he could actually remember everything! In the 1970s there were apparently times when he had no recollection of recording albums, because he was so out of it. Now he loved being in the studio. The entire band were like kids in a candy store. They were straight and they wanted to savour everything. It made them so easy to work with. Stories that they got back into bad habits while they were recording this album are completely untrue. I saw a lot of them, and can guarantee they were all sober – and loving the experience."

Steven Tyler and Joe Perry looking like rock stars in 1987

"IT WAS A REAL THRILL FOR ME TO WATCH AS THE ALBUM CLIMBED UP THE CHART, KNOWING THAT I'D WORKED ON IT."

DID YOU HAVE ANY CREATIVE INPUT IN THE ALBUM?

"Once I took over as the main engineer when Bob went on tour I was the person responsible for ensuring we got the sounds that everyone wanted. For instance, Bruce would tell me that he was after a particular guitar vibe and then it would be down to me to make sure it all happened. I guess that wasn't exactly creative input, but then again, that wasn't really my job. I was there to enable what Bruce and the band wanted. I did have one creative moment, though. We wanted to get the sound of killer whales to open up the song 'Heart's Done Time'. We went along to the local aquarium and asked them if we could record the killer whales they had down there. They allowed us in for 30 minutes one day after the aquarium had shut. I set up all the microphones and managed to get the whale song we were after for the song. That was something I was very proud of, and that's how I got to express my creativity. That was enough for me!"

WAS IT IMMEDIATELY CLEAR WHICH TRACKS WERE COMING OUT BEST?

"They all sounded great. There was never a moment when I thought certain things were sounding better than others. It was all on such a high level and the band never allowed their standards to drop. The entire process gave us all a massive boost."

WERE THERE MOMENTS WHEN THE BAND REALLY SURPRISED YOU?

"Seeing them in action was a constant surprise, in the most positive manner. This was an all-time great band I got to watch up close and personal, and that was special. But once I'd gotten used to the fact that I was working with the one and only Aerosmith, there were no surprises. At the end of the day we were all there to do the most professional job possible. That was the focus. There was no time, or indeed any inclination, for me to sit back and admire what was being done."

HOW OFTEN DID JOHN KALODNER COME TO THE STUDIO? DID HE HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON PROCEEDINGS?

"John came down to the studio once while we were recording, and then again during the mixing stage. There were probably other conversations going on between him and Bruce as to the way the album should be going. But I do know that when he was with us in the studio he was very satisfied with the way everything was developing. He never wanted to change any of the music. He left all that entirely to us. The one change he did make, though, was to the title of one of the songs. There was a track being recorded called 'Rag Time', but Kalodner didn't like that name at all. In his opinion it just wasn't an Aerosmith-style title. So he insisted the band alter it to 'Rag Doll', which is the way it's credited on the album. Mind you, if you listen carefully to the vocals on the song you can still hear Steven occasionally singing 'Rag time'."

WERE ANY SONGS ATTEMPTED THAT DIDN'T WORK?

"None at all. Every song they tried worked perfectly. There was nothing that had to be scrapped or abandoned in the studio . I suppose it was part of the charm of this project. Everything worked out so well."

WERE THERE ANY CLASHES BETWEEN BAND AND PRODUCER AT LITTLE MOUNTAIN?

"In any situation where you have a producer with his own views and a band with theirs, you're bound to have some moments of disagreement. And that did occasionally happen, yes. But it never led to any major arguments. I think there was always a mutual respect thing going on. So whenever we did reach a point where Bruce and the band wanted to go in different directions, then there'd be a chat between all the parties and an amicable agreement was soon reached. The atmosphere throughout was relaxed and convivial."

HOW LONG DID YOU SPEND IN THE STUDIO?

"We spent four weeks on the actual recording. Things went quite fast, because every day Bruce would work out exactly what would be done minute by minute. We all knew what was expected. The mixing stage took another

Photo: Tony Mottram

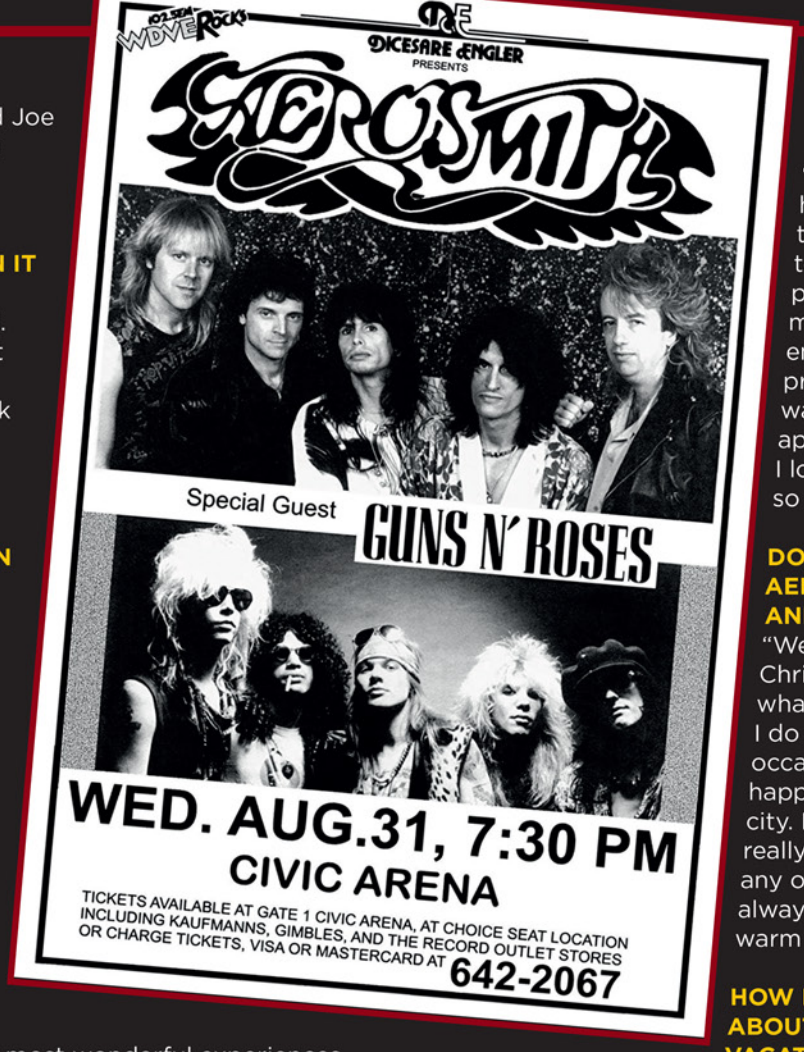
two weeks, with Steven and Joe with us at that point, giving their opinions."

WHAT WAS THE FEELING ABOUT THE ALBUM WHEN IT WAS FINISHED?
"Everyone was very excited. We knew we'd done a great job and that the album represented Aerosmith back to their best. What more could you ask for?"

DID YOU HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT GEFFEN BELIEVED THIS WOULD RETURN AEROSMITH TO THE BIG TIME?
"It was clear that Geffen were really into the album and that they were going to get right behind it. The label had the album they needed and wanted."

HOW WOULD YOU RATE 'PERMANENT VACATION' IN TERMS OF ENJOYMENT AND CREATIVE FULFILMENT IN YOUR OWN CAREER?
"Honestly, it was one of the most wonderful experiences I've ever had. I have nothing but the warmest of memories of the entire process. And it was a real thrill for me to watch as the album climbed up the chart, knowing that I'd worked on it."

YOU AND BRUCE FAIRBAIRN WORKED ON THE NEXT AEROSMITH ALBUM, 1989'S 'PUMP'. WAS THAT A VALIDATION OF WHAT YOU'D DONE WITH THE BAND ON 'PERMANENT VACATION'?
"Yes, it was. Aerosmith and Geffen wanted to keep the same team together for the recording of 'Pump'. Because it had worked so well there was no need to change anything personnel-wise. For me, there was an enormous sense of pride knowing that I was getting the nod of approval from a band I loved and respected so much."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AEROSMITH
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DO YOU STILL SEE THE AEROSMITH GUYS NOW AND AGAIN?
"Well, we don't exchange Christmas cards, if that's what you mean. But I do bump into them occasionally when we happen to be in the same city. I can't claim to be really close friends with any of the guys, but we've always retained a very warm relationship."

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE 'PERMANENT VACATION' EXPERIENCE WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT?
"The whole thing was special, because it was my first proper engineering job, and to know that so many people adore the album is just fantastic. I loved working with Aerosmith and I wouldn't change anything about it. I don't go out of my way to listen to 'Permanent Vacation', but that's because I don't ever put on any records I've worked on. But occasionally a song from the album comes on the radio, and you know what? It still sounds great!"

AEROSMITH – 'PERMANENT VACATION'

Recorded: March-May 1987
Released: 25 August 1987

LINE UP:
STEVEN TYLER – lead vocals, piano, harmonica, organ, plunger mute
JOE PERRY – guitar, backing vocals, pedal steel guitar on 'Rag Doll'
BRAD WHITFORD – guitar
TOM HAMILTON – bass
JOEY KRAMER – drums

Produced by Bruce Fairbairn
Engineered by Mike Fraser and Bob Rock
Mixed by Mike Fraser

Recorded: Little Mountain Sound Studios, Vancouver, Canada

TRACK LISTING
Heart's Done Time (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Desmond Child)
Magic Touch (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Jim Vallance)
Rag Doll (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Jim Vallance, Holly Knight)
Simoriah (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Jim Vallance)
Dude (Looks Like A Lady) (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Desmond Child)
St. John (Steven Tyler)
Hangman Jury (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Jim Vallance)
Girl Keeps Coming Apart (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry)
Angel (Steven Tyler, Desmond Child)
Permanent Vacation (Steven Tyler, Brad Whitford)
I'm Down (John Lennon, Paul McCartney)
The Movie (Steven Tyler, Joe Perry, Brad Whitford, Tom Hamilton, Joey Kramer)

OVERLOOKED

The Enuff Z'Nuff line-up that recorded the much-vaunted 1989 debut. Clockwise from top left: Donnie Vie (vocals and guitar), Derek Frigo (lead guitar), Vikki Fox (drums), Chip Z'Nuff (bass and vocals)

TOO MUCH IS NEVER Z'NUFF!

Enuff Z'Nuff had a lot of rock people getting hot under the collar when they first emerged out of Illinois in the late '80s. Their intriguing blend of hard rock riffs and Beatles melodies seemed tailor-made for mega-success, but somehow it never happened. *Dave Reynolds* talks to vocalist and guitarist **Donnie Vie** about what went wrong...

THE RELEASE OF ENUFF Z'Nuff's eponymous 1989 debut album was a definite 'mike drop moment'. At the time the four-piece from the memorably named Blue Island in Illinois comprised vocalist Donnie Vie, bassist Chip Z'Nuff, erstwhile Le Mans guitarist Derek Frigo and drummer Vikki Foxx. Songs like 'New Thing' and 'Fly High Michelle' were rock all right, but they weren't afraid to show off elements of pop that were heavily Beatles-influenced. To my ears it was a fantastic winning formula.

Image-wise, Enuff Z'Nuff seemed to be going for something along the lines of 'hair metal goes Day-Glo'. It appeared to fit the band's breezy musical style. Only later did the respective members admit that they weren't entirely comfortable with a look that had been foisted upon them by a record label, Atco, that was keen to help the band gain a commercial foothold by pandering to the predominant image of the time, the teased hair and bright colours that were working so well for the likes of Bon Jovi, Mötley Crüe and Poison.

Beneath the bubble gum surface, however, there were always darker forces at work. These tensions would eventually lead Enuff Z'Nuff into much inter-band acrimony. All that was for later, though. Back in 1989 the guys were full of optimism and on a mission – at least according to Chip Z'Nuff – to record and release more songs than their heroes, The Beatles, had put out in their entire lifespan as a band.

While Donnie Vie is no longer a member of Enuff Z'Nuff – Chip having taken over responsibility for fronting the group following Vie's departure in 2013 – he's now in a much better place, both physically and spiritually, than he's been in quite a while. He's also happy to revisit some of the best and worst times of his life as he reflects on Enuff Z'Nuff's legacy, while casting a light on his resurrected solo career as he releases a new album, 'Beautiful Things'. It's not only the best album Enuff Z'Nuff never made, it might just be the best album The Beatles never made too!

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE EARLY DAYS OF ENUFF Z'NUFF AND HOW YOU MET CHIP? WHAT DID YOU TWO HAVE IN COMMON?

"The short story is that I was very much an amateur when I started out as a musician. I used to go to ►

Photo: Getty Images/Ebet Roberts

OVERLOOKED

Enuff Z'Nuff taking it to the people. "All of my best memories are of things that happened with Chip."

see Chip's band, We're Staying, all the time in Chicago. I was a big fan of his bass playing and singing. He was something special. I began playing with the lead singer from Chip's old band in a group that was called Enough Z'Nuff. Note the different spelling there. They'd come up with the name originally. We needed a bass player. They really didn't want to work with Chip, but he came down anyway and the two of us hit it off. Chip gave me a ride home and asked me if I wanted to play sh*tty new wave with those guys or go put something else together and rock with him. I chose the latter option. This was in 1984 [and within a year the band had recorded an album's worth of material, later issued as the '1985' CD]. We had a lot in common. We liked the same kind of stuff. The Beatles, Squeeze, Tom Petty... He turned me on to Queen, actually... Plus we were both goofballs. Chip helped me become a professional in a very short space of time, because next thing I know I'm standing on stage. I wasn't the most confident person back then and that led to my drug habits, which would be the wedge that eventually drove us apart."

> "CHIP AND I HAD A LOT IN COMMON. WE LIKED THE SAME KIND OF STUFF. THE BEATLES, SQUEEZE, TOM PETTY… HE TURNED ME ON TO QUEEN, ACTUALLY… PLUS WE WERE BOTH GOOFBALLS."

WHAT WAS YOUR HOMETOWN OF BLUE ISLAND LIKE?

"Blue Island is 16 miles from central Chicago and has a very pretty name. Enuff Z'Nuff has written a lot of nostalgic songs about growing up and girlfriends we had there. When we were making the 'Welcome To Blue Island' album [released in 2003] the original album cover was going to be the town's actual road sign that has 30 bullet holes in it. Somehow we ended up with a painting that wasn't the original idea at all..."

HOW DID YOUR FIRST SINGLE, 'FINGERS ON IT', COME TO BE RELEASED BACK IN 1986?

"That was what I consider a baby song. It was the first thing I'd ever written and demoed, actually, and the lyric was based on a chick I picked up in a club one time. A guy called Steven Jones was putting together the soundtrack for [controversial psychological crime horror movie] *Henry: Portrait Of A Serial Killer* out of Chicago that year, and he got in touch to ask if he could use the song. We agreed."

HOW DID YOUR MAJOR LABEL DEAL WITH ATCO COME ABOUT?

"In 1988 we were shopping our material and showcasing for labels. Capitol Records were interested, but they reckoned the way we looked at that time – T-shirts and jeans – didn't fit the sound. Then we were at our rehearsal place one day and I noticed this guy with a beard hanging around. After we'd played he ►

Photos: Getty Images/Mick Hutson; IconicPix/PG Brunelli

Chip Z'Nuff. Still flying the Enuff Z'Nuff flag today

OVERLOOKED

The band give it some full glam attitude in London, April 1990

introduced himself. It turned out to be Derek Shulman, who was the main A&R guy from Atco. He told us he thought we were brilliant and wanted to sign us there and then."

HOW MUCH DID THE SUNSET STRIP GLAM METAL THING INFLUENCE WHAT YOU DID STYLE-WISE IN ENUFF Z'NUFF?

"We were stupid in that we jumped on that glam bandwagon when we should've been the first of our kind on our own train. Chip and I were always flamboyant, but it was tricky because the guys we were playing with in an early incarnation of the band, [guitarist] Gino Martino and [drummer] B.W. Boeski, didn't want to go down that route. We were a tight unit at that point, but Chip and I felt we had to step out and go on the ride. The image kinda just happened the way it did, and when it did we were already on that rollercoaster ride. We were getting played on MTV, so why would we want to step off the ride?"

YOU'D ALREADY BEEN THROUGH SOME LINE-UP CHANGES, BUT WHEN THE BAND SIGNED TO ATCO YOU AND CHIP HAD SETTLED ON DEREK FRIGO AND VIK FOXX...

"That's right. Derek Frigo was being managed by a guy called Ron Fajerstein. He was also managing us at the time, but Ron couldn't get Derek into a band. Somehow he joined us, though I always knew it would be toxic, because Frigo and I were like gasoline to a flame. It was combustible! It turned out that Derek had already played on some of the Enuff Z'Nuff songs that were being shopped to labels at that point, which was news to me at the time! Ironically, the guy who plays guitar in Enuff Z'Nuff these days, Alex Kane, was someone we begged to join us back then. We loved his moves, but he wound up putting a different band, Life Sex & Death, together. As for Vik Foxx, well we all make mistakes! He just slithered under the door one day and he was this most beautiful snake who could twirl sticks! But the guy I consider to be the definitive drummer in Enuff Z'Nuff was Ricky Parent, who replaced Vik when Vik bailed on us to join Vince Neil's band. Ricky was a really great guy [who sadly died of cancer in 2007]. May he rest in peace."

> "WE WERE A REALLY GREAT COMBO. WE COULD DO ANYTHING AND PLAY WITH ANYBODY – FROM DEBBIE GIBSON TO EDDIE MONEY – UNREHEARSED, AND PULL GREAT THINGS OUT OF THE HAT."

Photo: IconicPix/PG Brunelli

I CAN REMEMBER THAT THERE WERE HUGE EXPECTATIONS FOR THE BAND WHEN THE FIRST ALBUM WAS ABOUT TO APPEAR IN THE MIDDLE OF '89. HOW DID THINGS PAN OUT?

"The first album came out of the box strong with 'New Thing' as the debut single [peaking in the US at 67]. But music was already changing radically at that time and the structure of the record label changed as well. The second single 'Fly High Michelle' was going well, we were getting ready to tour with Mötley Crüe and 'I Could Never Be Without You' was lined up to be the third single. It all seemed logical, but then all of a sudden we were told we needed to make the next record! So we went and made 'Strength' [that came out in March of 1991]. It was a record where you could see we were evolving and that we'd become better writers. We did a couple of videos for 'Mother's Eyes' and 'Baby Loves You' and then something happened at the label again. Despite the fact that we'd signed an eight-album deal we soon realised that we were going to be stuck on the shelf. So to get out of our deal with Atco we had to file for bankruptcy."

YOU MANAGED TO PICK UP ANOTHER MAJOR LABEL DEAL WITH ARISTA, THOUGH, DIDN'T YOU?

"We did. We had a meeting with [A&R legend] John Kalodner at Geffen, but he didn't think our songs were good enough. He wanted to build us back up from scratch, and we weren't into that. Clive Davis at Arista, on the other hand, was really excited, especially about a song I'd written called 'Innocence'. Clive wanted another power ballad, so I gave him 'Right By Your Side' – and he loved that too. So we got a big deal with Arista and Clive Davis got Richie Zito in to produce four songs, including those two. We produced the rest of the tunes for what became the 'Animals With Human Intelligence' album in 1993, but that signalled to me that Clive really didn't give a f*ck about the band. He just liked those two songs. We did a number on that album called 'Superstitious', which was a stupid song, and then all sorts of buffoonery started happening. I was done with all the bullsh*t after 'Animals...' I thought about going solo at that point, but I was in a gang and would've been lonely out on my own."

VIKKI FOXX QUIT BEFORE 'ANIMALS...' WAS RELEASED TO JOIN VINCE NEIL'S BAND. WAS HE DELIBERATELY AIRBRUSHED FROM THE ALBUM SLEEVE?

"Absolutely! I would've liked to airbrush him out of life at that time. We'd heard rumours that Vik was going to join Vince's band after he'd recorded the drum tracks for our album, but he was adamant that he wasn't leaving Enuff Z'Nuff. It was Ricky Parent who told us that Vikki was joining Vince's band. He'd been up for the job too and had been told that Vikki had pipped him to it. We were still finishing the record when we saw Vikki playing with Vince Neil on TV! And of course Ricky wound up replacing him in Enuff Z'Nuff."

WHY DO YOU THINK THE HUGELY INFLUENTIAL U.S. TALK SHOW HOST DAVID LETTERMAN LIKED YOU GUYS SO MUCH AT THE TIME?

"For the same reason that you like the band! We were a really great combo. We could do anything and play with anybody – from Debbie Gibson to Eddie Money – unrehearsed, and pull great things out of the hat."

HOW TOUGH WAS IT FOR ENUFF Z'NUFF IN THE '90S IN THE SLIPSTREAM OF GRUNGE?

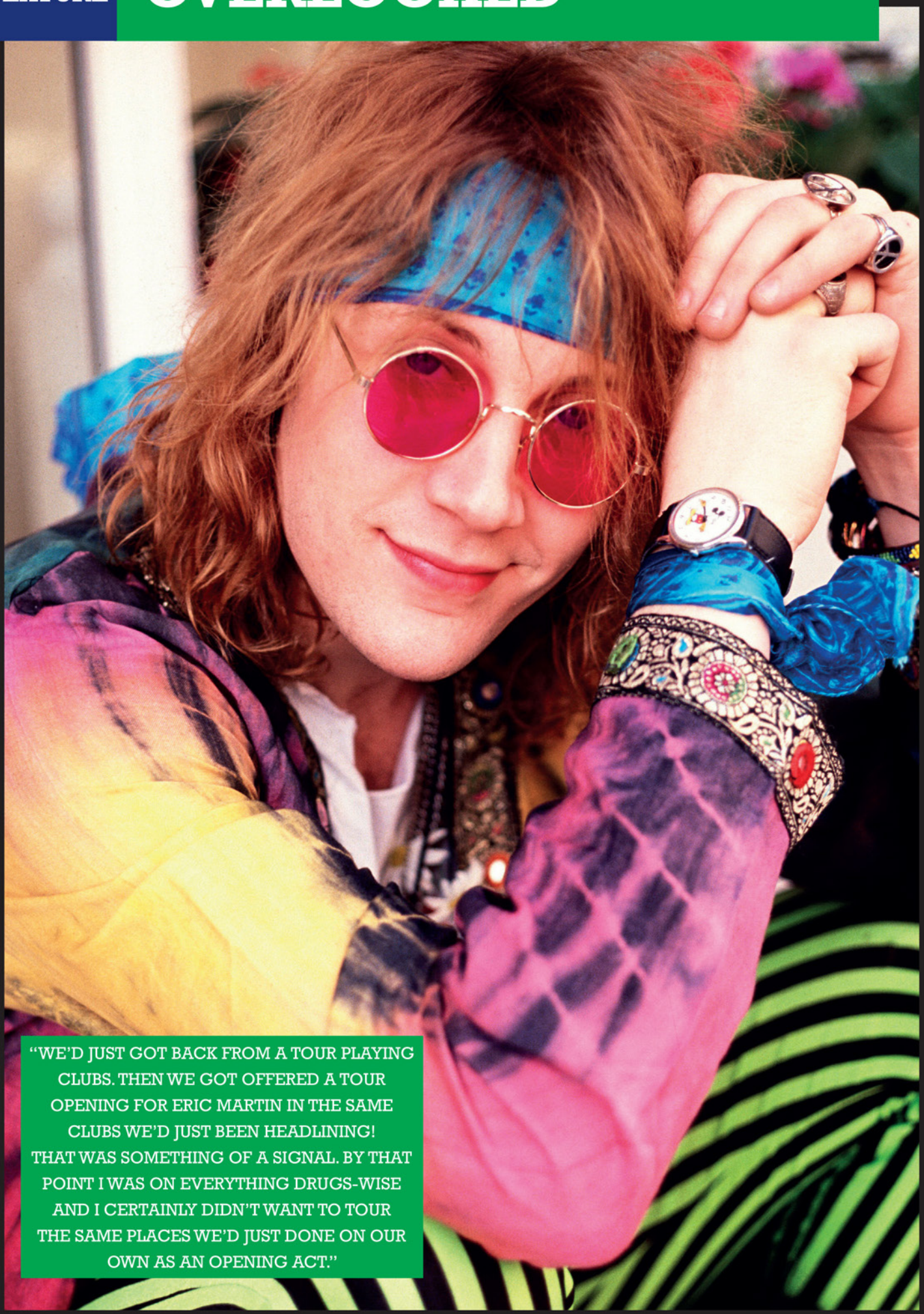
"We got dropped by Arista after the one album and then went the independent label route. We fired Derek Frigo and made a lot of music, but we wasted a lot of time too. There was a song called 'Freak' that sticks in my mind. I guess it was my attempt at a grunge song, but in retrospect it's obvious that that wasn't who we were. I think if we'd come out in jeans and T-shirts – which looked cool on us – right at the start, then I think we would've been able to grow rather than be pigeonholed. Had that happened though, and we'd become a huge band, I think I would have snorted all of Ireland through my nose..."

> "WE WERE STUPID IN THAT WE JUMPED ON THAT GLAM BANDWAGON WHEN WE SHOULD'VE BEEN THE FIRST OF OUR KIND ON OUR OWN TRAIN. THE IMAGE KINDA JUST HAPPENED THE WAY IT DID, AND WHEN IT DID WE WERE ALREADY ON THAT ROLLERCOASTER RIDE. WE WERE GETTING PLAYED ON MTV, SO WHY WOULD WE WANT TO STEP OFF THE RIDE?"

YOU STOPPED TOURING WITH THE BAND IN 2002, BUT CONTINUED TO WORK WITH THEM. THAT WAS AN UNUSUAL ARRANGEMENT. HOW DID IT WORK?

"We finished 'Welcome To Blue Island' [that was eventually released in 2003] and we'd been very creative making that record. But then it got mixed in a way that bore no resemblance to how I'd envisaged it. I'd given Chip a notebook with details as to how each song should be mixed, but I might as well have shoved it up my ass! We'd just got back from a tour playing clubs. Then we got offered a tour opening for Eric Martin in the same clubs we'd just been headlining! That was something of a sign. By that point I was on everything drugs-wise and I certainly didn't want to tour the same places we'd just done on our own as an opening act. Our manager said to Chip that he could get our guitarist at the ►

OVERLOOKED



"WE'D JUST GOT BACK FROM A TOUR PLAYING CLUBS. THEN WE GOT OFFERED A TOUR OPENING FOR ERIC MARTIN IN THE SAME CLUBS WE'D JUST BEEN HEADLINING! THAT WAS SOMETHING OF A SIGNAL. BY THAT POINT I WAS ON EVERYTHING DRUGS-WISE AND I CERTAINLY DIDN'T WANT TO TOUR THE SAME PLACES WE'D JUST DONE ON OUR OWN AS AN OPENING ACT."

time, Johnny Monaco, to sing instead. Chip said, 'Can I do that?' And then he did it. He ran with the idea and I gave it my blessing."

HOW DIFFICULT WAS IT LOSING DEREK FRIGO TO DRUGS IN 2004 AND RICKY PARENT TO CANCER THREE YEARS LATER?

"I had run into Derek again when I was living in LA and he was clean and sober. He and Vikki were working together and all their stuff was really good. The three of us started playing together again and we even did a small show. Then Derek fell off the wagon again and he died soon after that. It was a really bittersweet moment. I was truly sad to learn that he'd died, but at least we'd been able to patch our relationship up and had played together again. Ricky was a different scenario. He'd always been so healthy. I just couldn't believe how quickly he went downhill, but I guess that if it's your time then it's your time. We had talked before he died, joking around as usual, but sadly he was gone just a couple of weeks later."

Donnie's Enuff Z'Nuff sparring partner, Chip Z'Nuff. "Do I love the guy more than I hate him? Yeah."

ENUFF Z'NUFF GOT BACK TOGETHER IN 2006 TO FILM A PILOT EPISODE FOR A VH1 REALITY SHOW. HOW WAS THAT?

"It was a reunion without Derek Frigo, obviously, with the intention of making a record and giving it another shot, but it was a catastrophe. It never aired."

YOU EVENTUALLY MANAGED TO RETURN IN 2009 WITH THE 'DISSONANCE' ALBUM. HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?

"Except for the sh*t that got stuck on the record after the five or six songs I did, it's probably my favourite Enuff Z'Nuff record. And we got Jake E. Lee to play on it. It's heavy the right way, rather than covering things up with a buzz saw guitar."

SO WHY DID YOU LEAVE THE BAND AGAIN IN 2013?

"That's simple. I got fired. We didn't agree on anything at that time and I insisted on being paid before each show. So they basically fired me."

YOU STARTED A SOLO CAREER ALMOST BY ACCIDENT, THEN, BUT HAVE JUST RELEASED ARGUABLY THE BEST RECORD OF YOUR CAREER IN 'BEAUTIFUL THINGS'...

"My first solo album [2003's 'Just Enough!'] wasn't intended to be a solo record. I worked with this guy called Andrew Rollins just to write songs for other artists. But then we decided to release what we'd done. It had a couple of good songs on it. The next record, 'Wrapped Around My Middle Finger', from 2012, was a result of trying to make an Enuff Z'Nuff record. We weren't rehearsing, we were just playing the same 20 f*cking songs all the time. So I did 'Wrapped...' and it still had the Enuff Z'Nuff vibe. Really, though, I always try to evolve. My policy is always to outdo the last thing I did. My interest lies in the art. I never wanted to be a rock star and you've seen I can't dance, so 'Beautiful Things' is a bit of a rebirth. I'd worn myself out, I was in bad shape and I had to get my sh*t together. It had been three or four years since I'd last written a song. I got off the drugs and the booze, I got it all together and my ability to write songs came back. This is the album I always wanted to make and some of the songs are very personal. 'Fly' is the most personal song on there, but to be honest 'Whatever' sums me up pretty well in three minutes!"

SO FINALLY DONNIE, WHAT'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHIP LIKE THESE DAYS?

"Fans tell me they wish that Chip and I would get back together. Why? Would they get back with their ex-wife just because I asked them to? If the question is do I love the guy more than I hate him, then yeah. All of my best memories are of things that happened with Chip. I guess it will always be that big brother and little brother relationship."

Photos: IconicPix/PG Brunelli; Getty Images/Ebet Roberts

THE *ROCK CANDY* Q&A

KIP WINGER

THE MAN WHO GOT IT IN THE NECK FROM BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD ON BEING MENTORED BY ALICE COOPER, THE DAYS OF BIG HAIR, AND WRITING CLASSICAL MUSIC…

YOU STUDIED CLASSICAL MUSIC IN YOUR TEENS. WAS THAT YOUR FIRST MUSICAL INTEREST?
"No, not at all. Originally I was a self-taught bassist. From the age of seven I played in a band called Blackwood Creek with my brothers Nate and Paul, and we covered songs by all the big '70s bands. But I took piano lessons when I was 15 or 16 and that was when I also studied classical guitar and ballet. I was impressed by both."

IN YOUR EARLY PROFESSIONAL DAYS YOU WORKED A LOT WITH PRODUCER BEAU HILL. DID HE OPEN A LOT OF DOORS FOR YOU?
"Yes, he did. Beau was really important to me. I first met him when he was in a band called Airborne in Colorado, and when he moved to New York I followed him. He got me to play and sing on a lot of sessions for bands he was producing, he introduced me to [Winger guitarist] Reb Beach when both of us worked on the Fiona album 'Beyond The Pale' in 1986, and he also landed Winger our deal with Atlantic."

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM WORKING WITH ALICE COOPER FOR TWO YEARS BETWEEN 1985 AND 1987?
"Everything. How to tour, how to deal with the media, how to deal with the fans. I owe him so much. Alice is a true blue blood rocker, and he's such a generous person. We're still good friends."

> "MUSICALLY, WE WANTED TO TAKE ELEMENTS FROM JETHRO TULL AND YES. BUT WE WERE WATCHING MTV AND SEEING HOW BANDS LIKE DEF LEPPARD AND BON JOVI WERE TEASING THEIR HAIR, SO THAT'S WHAT WE DECIDED WE SHOULD DO. WE CAN ONLY BLAME OURSELVES FOR THAT."

WINGER WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL IN THE LATE '80S AND EARLY '90S. BUT DID IT FRUSTRATE YOU THAT YOU WERE LUMPED IN WITH THE 'BIG HAIR' BANDS?
"Yes, and no. It was really our own fault. Musically, we wanted to take elements from Jethro Tull and Yes. But we were watching MTV and seeing how bands like Def Leppard and Bon Jovi were teasing their hair, so that's what we decided we should do. In terms of image we were followers, while at the same time trying to be musical leaders. What we were doing musically was outside of the big hair thing, but because we went for that image we were also right inside it – and can only blame ourselves for that."

HAVE YOU EVER TALKED TO *BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD* CREATOR MIKE JUDGE ABOUT WHY WINGER WAS THE BUTT OF SO MANY JOKES IN THE CARTOON?
"I have, yes. He claimed Winger was just a random choice and it happened to stick. Looking back it was funny. But it wasn't for us at the time, because we were the object of the joke. It did do me some good, though, because it sort of undermined the band, and in a weird way that freed me up to do the sort of music I wanted to do. It helped me to avoid being tied to the big hair stuff."

AFTER WINGER SPLIT IN 1994 YOU STARTED A SOLO CAREER. WAS IT A RELIEF TO ESCAPE FROM TOO MANY COMMERCIAL EXPECTATIONS?
"It was. I got to change the template of the way I worked. In the early '90s a lot of old big hair bands tried to make grunge style music to fit in with what was happening at the time. But before Winger I was doing stuff that was inspired by Peter Gabriel. So with my solo stuff I took the opportunity to return to that approach."

WHICH WINGER ALBUM ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?
"I'd have to say 'Pull' from 1993 or 'Karma' that I made in 2009. They best represent what we're about. But my favourite song to play live is 'Midnight Driver Of A Love Machine' from 'Better Days Comin'', our last album that came out in 2014."

HOW DID THE LOSS OF YOUR FIRST WIFE IN A CAR ACCIDENT IN 1996 AFFECT YOU?
"When my wife Beatrice died I was writing songs for my second solo album 'Down Incognito'. Much of it was written while she was alive, so going back and finishing it afterwards was tough, yet also a welcome escape from reality. Making the album helped me to get through that period – as did a good bottle of Scotch!"

YOU'VE COMPOSED A LOT OF CLASSICAL MUSIC. WAS IT A CHALLENGE TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE IN A WORLD THAT'S A LONG WAY FROM ROCK?
"Very much so, but I was determined not to be seen as a rock star coming into their world. Rather, I wanted to be accepted on their terms. When orchestras saw that I was putting complex compositions of my own in front of them, then I got their respect. They realised I wasn't someone who was going to throw rock music success in their faces."

YOU WERE NOMINATED FOR A GRAMMY IN 2017 FOR YOUR CLASSICAL PIECE, 'CONVERSATIONS WITH NIJINSKY'. HOW SATISFYING WAS THAT?
"Well, I definitely wondered how I got from *Beavis And Butt-Head* to that! It was both completely unexpected and very rewarding. A friend submitted the album to the Grammy committee, but I will admit that I did ask some people to vote for me! The following year I was asked to be on the panel selecting the classical nominees myself. I was even more amazed that I'd been nominated after seeing how mean they could be when judging."

YOU'VE RECENTLY WRITTEN A ROCK OPERA CALLED *GET JACK*. WHY?
"I'd wanted to do something big like this for a while, and then I met a guy called Damien Gray, who's directed musicals in the past. He was the person I needed to come up with the story. It was his idea to do a musical based on Jack The Ripper, with the twist that it's from the viewpoint of the women involved. We've worked on the project for close on four years now, and have just released an album of the original soundtrack. We're still a long way off having it ready for the theatre, though. We're on the fifth rewrite now and it's been harder work than anything I've ever done."

WILL WINGER CARRY ON REUNITING FOR OCCASIONAL TOURS AND RECORDING?
"We're about to start work on a new album. I'm just building a new studio and when it's finished we'll go in there. The album will feature all the original guys – myself, Reb, Paul Taylor on keyboards and Rod Morgenstein on drums – plus guitarist John Roth, who's been part of the band since 1993. I'm excited, and we're looking to release the album sometime in 2020."

Interview by Malcolm Dome. Photo: Getty Images/Ebet Roberts/Redferns

ACE FREHLEY

FLYING HIGH AGAIN

Ace Frehley is the man who gave the original **Kiss** line-up one hugely important attribute – attitude – and he remains a massive favourite with the band's hardcore fans to this day. **Dave Reynolds** hooks up with the guitarist for a wide-ranging interview...

DESPITE ADMITTING TO HAVING never taken a guitar lesson and being purely self-taught, Paul Daniel 'Ace' Frehley became one of the most influential players of all-time as one of the four original members of Kiss.

The band was formed in 1973 from the ashes of various New York outfits including Gene Simmons' and Paul Stanley's band Wicked Lester. With the help of visionary manager Bill Aucoin and Casablanca label boss Neil Bogart, the quartet quickly became one of America's greatest concert attractions, in addition to achieving multi-platinum record sales as they kicked their platform-booted way from their mid- to late-'70s heyday into a more challenging period for them in the early '80s.

Ace Frehley gained his nickname after showing an impressive ability to snare girlfriends at school. Although his musical achievements were framed against a background of personal excess that involved copious amounts of drugs, booze and women (along with the odd wrecked DeLorean automobile), as he rightly points out he was never fired from Kiss. He enjoyed, effectively, two stints with the self-styled 'hottest band in the world', the first ending in late 1982 and the second starting when the original band reunited in 1996.

Born in the Bronx, New York in 1951, Frehley first quit the band as Kiss were about to make a 'return to form' comeback after the disaster that was the conceptual '(Music From) The Elder' recording in 1981. Although he appeared on the cover artwork of Kiss's 'Creatures Of The Night', released in October 1982, and participated in the video for the 'I Love It Loud' single, Ace played no part in the actual recording of the album and officially announced his departure after completing a promotional tour of Europe at the end of that year.

HAVING SIGNED a deal with Megaforce Records (at the time an Atlantic Records affiliate) the guitarist's first post-Kiss album finally emerged in 1987. Interestingly, Ace chose to launch his new project as a band rather than as a pure solo outing and had carefully assembled a collection of talented musicians. The amusingly titled Frehley's Comet included ex-707 vocalist/guitarist Tod Howarth (who'd replaced Ace's original choice of right hand man, Richie Scarlet, in the line-up), former Peter Frampton bassist John Regan, and Frehley's long-time partner-in-crime, drummer Anton Fig (of Spider/Shanghai/David Letterman fame). After the eponymous debut album's modest success, a year down the line 'Second Sighting' didn't sell as well as everyone expected. The problem was that there just weren't enough Ace Frehley songs on it. Indeed, *Rock Candy Mag* editor Howard Johnson noted in his review of the album in issue 190 of *Kerrang!* back in June 1988 that Ace "hasn't been the egotistical bastard that all great guitarists are... he hasn't taken the music by the scruff of the neck and made it all his own."

It was all change for Frehley's next solo album, as Ace dropped the Frehley's Comet moniker to revert to his own name. 1989's 'Trouble Walkin'' also found him reunited with original Frehley's Comet member Richie Scarlet and veteran producer Eddie Kramer, with whom Ace had recorded not only as a member of Kiss, but also on his legendary first solo album released in 1978. A pretty solid affair, 'Trouble Walkin'' regained a little of the ground lost with 'Second Sighting', but not enough to enable him to follow it up with anything sturdier.

AFTER LOSING the Megaforce deal it wouldn't be until 2009, some 20 years later, that the Spaceman's ►

Photo: Getty Images/Fin Costello/Redferns

ACE FREHLEY

Ace knows how to Kiss and make up

next solo studio release, 'Anomaly', appeared. Frehley had signed up to the reunion of the original Kiss line-up in 1996 and the first 'together again' tour was successful. But cracks would appear over time, resulting in the eventual departures of both Ace in 2002 and drummer Peter Criss in 2004.

Kiss's undisputed leadership team of bassist/vocalist Gene Simmons and rhythm guitarist/vocalist Paul Stanley has subsequently chosen to continue with former Black 'N Blue guitarist Tommy Thayer, who had been in the fold since 1994, and former Badlands and Black Sabbath drummer Eric Singer, who first came in to replace Eric Carr. Controversially, Thayer and Singer have adopted the Spaceman and Catman characters popularised by Frehley and Criss.

> "THERE WAS ALWAYS COMPETITION IN KISS, ALTHOUGH THE FIERCEST COMPETITION WAS BETWEEN GENE AND PAUL. IT STILL IS. I'D NOT FIGHT ABOUT IT TOO MUCH BECAUSE I'D ALWAYS GET THE SPOTLIGHT ON STAGE FOR MY SOLOS. BUT IT WAS HEALTHY COMPETITION, BECAUSE WE CREATED SOMETHING SPECIAL."

HAVING BEEN sober for over a decade now, Frehley has been extremely proactive over the last few years, successfully resurrecting his solo career in 2014 with 'Space Invader' and subsequently being more prolific than in the previous 20 years! He's also been building plenty of bridges with Simmons and Stanley, despite a recent verbal spat over the current Kiss 'End Of The Road' tour. The former played bass and co-wrote two songs with Ace on last year's 'Spaceman' offering. The latter provided lead vocals on a fine version of Free's 'Fire And Water' on Ace's covers album, 'Origins, Vol. 1'.

When *Rock Candy Mag* caught up with Ace recently, we found him in fine form and as candid as ever when discussing his career...

YOU HAVE A NEW SOLO ALBUM DUE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR CALLED 'ORIGINS, VOL. 2' – THE SEQUEL TO YOUR FIRST COVERS ALBUM 'ORIGINS, VOL. 1' FROM 2016. IS THE CONCEPT THE SAME, WHERE YOU COLLABORATE WITH GUEST ARTISTS?

"Yes it is. I've got John 5 playing guitar, as he did on the first volume. Bruce Kulick plays on Jimi Hendrix's 'Manic Depression' and Lita Ford, whom I've known ever since she was in The Runaways and who was also on 'Vol. 1', is contributing again. Lita and Cheap Trick's Robin Zander are the two guest vocalists. Robin's singing lead on Humble Pie's '30 Days In The Hole', while Lita's done 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' by the Rolling Stones. She came to my house and I coached her for two days. She came up with some great ideas when it came to changing the arrangement and absolutely nailed the song."

WERE YOU PLEASED WITH THE RESPONSE TO YOUR LAST ALBUM, 2018'S 'SPACEMAN'?

"Yeah, I think it was received quite well. I'm really happy with it. Obviously it had the two tracks I co-wrote with

Gene Simmons ['Without You I'm Nothing' and 'Your Wish Is My Command'], but I'm really surprised that the cover of Eddie Money's 'I Wanna Go Back' didn't raise more eyebrows. It's one of my favourite songs on the record. I always thought it was a well-written song and I love the lyrics. I started playing it live and it works really well."

Ace gives it a knee drop to solo back in '75

WHAT DID 'SPACEMAN' TELL US ABOUT ACE THAT WE DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW?
"I don't think it gave anybody any new insight into me. It's the same writing, same playing that I've done over the last 40 years. But I do think it shows consistency and fortitude. I've been regularly churning out albums that have always sold well and I know that 'Origins, Vol. 2' will be well received."

YOU SEEM VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR SPECIALIST SUBJECT IN 'PURSUIT OF ROCK AND ROLL'. DEFIANT, EVEN?
"My first wife Jeanette told me she thought that should've been the first single from the 'Spaceman' album. I'm still as enthused as ever about rock'n'roll, especially because the switch to a new band line-up has made it much easier to tour. I also have a new road manager. The old guy was a little on the nervous side, but the new guy is more laid back and doesn't get rattled easily. I also find myself enjoying flying more than I used to. That certainly helps. I mean, I'm going to Atlanta this week and then on to Lexington and I'm really looking forward to it. Everything just feels so much easier!"

THE FIRST TIME I HEARD 'ROCKIN' WITH THE BOYS', WITH ITS LYRIC ABOUT *"WE'VE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES"*, I ASSUMED IT WAS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH KISS. BUT ON CLOSER SCRUTINY IT SEEMS TO BE MORE TO DO WITH TIRING OF BEING ON THE ROAD.
"I think it's easier now I'm a seasoned racehorse! When I used to party I was my own worst enemy, because waking up with a hangover every day wasn't good. I'm healthier now and it's all about fine tuning. The changes I've made to my lifestyle have been good. I'm in the groove now. For example, I've been staying with my daughter Monique and catching up with her in California. I found it's easier to get a flight out from the airport 10 minutes from her house [John Wayne Airport at Newport Beach] than go through the stress of having to fly from LAX [Los Angeles International]. It's those little changes that can make all the difference."

SUBJECT-WISE, THAT SONG HAS AN AIR OF 'BETH' ABOUT IT... *"I'LL GIVE YOU A BUZZ WHEN I TAKE A BREAK, NOW I'M ROCKING WITH THE BOYS."*
"I find it interesting how people interpret lyrics and can get different things from them. I write lyrics so quickly that I really don't put too much effort into them. Sometimes I do feel things are beamed into my head! I mean, I never took a guitar lesson, yet now I'm considered an influential guitar player. I just had visions of being a rock star when I was 17 and it's been a rollercoaster ride ever since. I'm a lot more focused now, though!"

> "IN KISS GENE AND PAUL KNEW HOW TO PUSH MY BUTTONS AND A LOT OF THE TIME I'D DRINK BECAUSE OF DECISIONS THEY MADE. I'VE LONG SINCE LEARNT TO NOT HAVE ANY RESENTMENT AND TO WORK THROUGH ANY PROBLEMS THAT I'VE BEEN FACING."

YOU HAVE THAT NEW BAND, OF COURSE...
"Yeah, they were playing with Gene in his solo band. I still can't remember their surnames though, but Jeremy [Asbrock] – the guitar player – plays leads with me on the version of Zeppelin's 'Good Times, Bad Times' that will be on 'Origins, Vol. 2'. I first met them when I played with Gene in Australia and went on to play eight shows with them on my own in Japan [the line-up is completed by guitarist Ryan Cook, bassist Philip Shouse and drummer Christopher Williams]. It was so successful and carefree that I decided to keep this band and fire the old line-up, which was really tough as [guitarist] Richie Scarlet's wife had just died. But I did it for economical reasons as when the new guys aren't playing with me they go out on their own. The thing is, they're younger and hungrier and I didn't have to teach them anything. They knew all my songs. I didn't have to show them anything, so the whole musical transition was effortless."

BUT AT THE AGE OF 68 TOURING MUST BE FAR HARDER THAN IN YOUR YOUTH?
"I've been on the road most of my life, so I actually feel at home in a hotel room, so long as it's a nice hotel of course! Airports don't bother me, but I'm not a big fan of touring in a bus. I think it's something to do with the vibration of the road, as well as the fact I really don't like being confined in a bus for the length of time that many of those trips take."

Photos: Getty Images/Robin Platzer/IMAGES; Getty Images/Richard E. Aaron/Redferns

ACE FREHLEY

IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE YOU LAST PLAYED THE UK, AT DOWNLOAD 2015. WHAT'S THE LIKELIHOOD OF MAKING IT OVER ON THE CURRENT TOUR?
"I'm getting offered a lot of festivals in Europe, but I've made no commitments at this time. I've had interest from Germany and Sweden, but I wouldn't leave out the UK because I have a lot of good memories of playing there – although a lot of them are sketchy! I used to find [UFO bassist] Pete Way knocking on my door a lot when I was in England and he'd pull out cans of Special Brew! But I've stopped drinking and am in a much better place, health-wise. I'm going to be 70 in two years' time and people have been telling me that I look younger now than I did 20 years ago!"

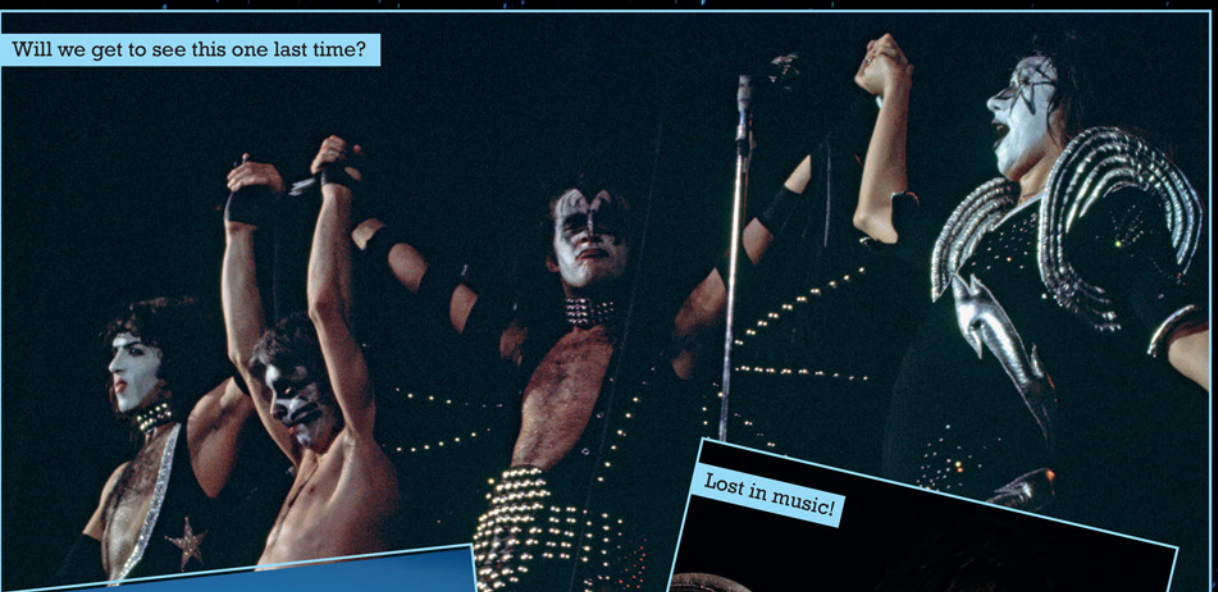
YOU'VE BEEN SOBER FOR, WHAT, 11 YEARS?
"13 years. My life is easier, focused on the tasks in hand and my future is bright."

PRESUMABLY LIFE IS FAR HAPPIER AND SIMPLER?
"Yeah, I've been doing a lot of energy work and been drawing out all the negative energy from my body. I just dropped seven pounds after I read on social media that people had been commenting about my weight and thinking I'd gone back to my old ways. That gave me a kick to get back on the no-carbs diet. So all is good and I'm really happy with everything."

CAN WE TALK A BIT ABOUT YOUR STYLE OF GUITAR PLAYING? I'VE READ THAT IN A TECHNICAL SENSE YOU DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DO WHAT YOU DO...
"According to this woman who I go to in order to have my cards read, I've had a past life where I've lived in another galaxy! It's amazing, which might explain it! And on the subject of card reading, when she reads my cards the same ones always come up, which rarely happens."

> "I KNOW ALL THE MOVES, I KNOW ALL THE CUES. I HAVEN'T WORN THE MAKE-UP SINCE I DID A DUNKIN' DONUTS COMMERCIAL IN 2007, AND I DON'T RELISH PUTTING IT BACK ON, BECAUSE I'D HAVE TO SHAVE OFF MY BEARD, BUT I'M SURE IT WOULD BECOME REALLY EASY PRETTY QUICKLY!"

AND YET THE LIKES OF SLASH, JOHN 5, DAVE MUSTAINE, MIKE MCCREADY AND THE LATE, GREAT DIMEBAG CITE YOU AS A PRIME INFLUENCE. THAT'S A PRETTY DIVERSE LIST.
"I'm flattered by it and it's been fun to play with many of the guys who've cited me as an influence. I recently did a show with the Kings Of Chaos alongside Gilby Clarke, Warren DeMartini, James LoMenzo, Matt Sorum and



Will we get to see this one last time?

Kiss photographed in Los Angeles, January 1975. Ace appears to be having a hard time staying awake

Lost in music!

Sebastian Bach. Sebastian is an old friend, James LoMenzo has played bass in my band in the past and I've played with both Gilby and Matt before too. In fact Matt helped me with my instructional video, *Behind The Player*, back in 2009. It's always fun working with any of those guys. Oh, and Slash, of course, played on the cover of Thin Lizzy's 'Emerald' on 'Origins, Vol. 1'."

WHAT ABOUT THE COMPETITIVE ELEMENT THAT MIGHT HAVE EXISTED WHEN YOU WERE IN KISS? IT'S GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT YOUR ALBUM AND PAUL'S WERE SUPERIOR TO GENE'S AND PETER'S. PEOPLE REALLY LOVED YOUR HIT SINGLE 'NEW YORK GROOVE'. DID YOU SET OUT TO OUTDO ONE ANOTHER?

"There was always competition in Kiss, although the fiercest competition was between Gene and Paul. It still is. But I'd not fight about it too much because I'd always get the spotlight on stage for my solos, and then I got my first lead vocal with 'Shock Me' [on the 'Love Gun' album from 1977]. But it was healthy competition, because we created something special. The chemistry couldn't be explained, because we were from such diverse backgrounds. It just clicked. However, I got caught up with the drugs, the booze and the women. Rock'n'roll did me in!"

WE SUSPECT THERE ARE FANS WHO'D LOVE TO HEAR YOU PERFORM THE ACE FREHLEY ALBUM FROM '78 IN ITS ENTIRETY.

"We actually did it in its entirety with my new band at a convention in New Jersey last year [the Kiss Expo at the Hilton hotel in Parsippany on 9 December 2018]. There were 2000 people there and we did the whole album in sequence from beginning to end. There wasn't much publicity, but we do have a video of it. Actually, I was quite superstitious about the 'Spaceman' album because that was released 40 years after that first solo album, so I made sure I only had nine songs on it as that first album only had nine songs. The cover of 'Spaceman' was also a recreation of the photo session that I did with Barry Levine back in 1978 with the throne."

SOME FANS MAY STILL HANKER FOR FREHLEY'S COMET. IS THAT A PROJECT YOU WOULD CONSIDER REVIVING?

"That almost feels like another lifetime for me. It was another era. I was getting high. I wasn't as focussed. It was a different me."

IT WAS A GREAT MOMENT IN 1988, THOUGH, WHEN YOU PLAYED WITH FREHLEY'S COMET AT THE LIMELIGHT IN NEW YORK AND GENE AND PAUL STEPPED UP TO PERFORM 'DEUCE' WITH YOU AS AN ENCORE. THE GUYS FROM ANTHRAX WERE GOING ABSOLUTELY NUTS DOWN AT THE FRONT!

"Yeah, that was a great night. The Limelight was always an interesting place!"

WE'VE HAD THIS ONGOING SAGA OF GENE AND PAUL REFUSING TO LET YOU PLAY WITH KISS AGAIN, NOTABLY AT THE HALL OF FAME. THAT SCENARIO FELT RATHER TRAGIC.

"I think we have a really good relationship now. I text Paul back and forth and we've worked together, as I have with Gene. It would be nice to go back out with them again, but it's not my call. I would seriously consider it, but the money would have to be right. I'm not gonna take Tommy Thayer's salary! It would certainly sell more tickets to have me involved. I have a gut feeling it will happen."

Photos: Getty Images/Tom Hill/WireImage; Getty Images/Michael Putland; Getty Images/Michael Ochs Archives; Getty Images/Stan Pgacic/Corbis

ACE FREHLEY

Backstage relaxing in '79

WHAT ABOUT MERELY A GUEST APPEARANCE?
"That would have to be presented to me in the right way."

HAVE YOU DISCUSSED IT WITH PETER CRISS?
"I haven't discussed it with Pete. I recently invited him to play with me when we came near to his home, but he declined, which kinda surprised me. But I think he hasn't been 100% health-wise recently, so that may have had something to do with his decision."

YOUR PAST BEHAVIOUR HAS BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED IN INTERVIEWS AND YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHY *NO REGRETS*. IS YOUR REPUTATION AS THE BAD BOY OF KISS JUSTIFIED?
"In a way yes. I think that used to be my reputation in the '70s and '80s because in-between crashing cars and overindulging I was probably the worst of the four of us. But even as early as the '80s I started seeking help, though it never really stuck because you'd go out on tour with bands confined on the bus and I'd end up having a beer, smoking a joint...

"In Kiss Gene and Paul knew how to push my buttons and a lot of the time I'd drink because of decisions they made. I've long since learnt to not have any resentment and to work through any problems that I've been facing. As a result of that I feel almost reborn, because I no longer find myself having to look over my shoulder when I'm driving because I've been drinking, or worrying about being stopped at borders because I'm carrying something on me."

SO YOU GOT TO MAKE YOUR PEACE WITH GENE AND PAUL, YES?
"Gene came over to my house and we co-wrote those two songs for 'Spaceman' and I played with him in Australia before hiring his band and going on to Japan. Everyone thinks we hate each other, but that's not the case at all. I know that I put those guys through hell in the past. Sometimes I was too drunk at sound checks, but sobriety has made me more dependable and reliable. That's a big plus should we ever do anything going forward with Kiss."

THAT'S GREAT TO HEAR! I REMEMBER YOU FALLING OVER AT A PERSONAL APPEARANCE WITH KISS IN LONDON IN 1982 DURING A SIGNING SESSION...
"Well, I've never had great balance to be honest, even today! Because I drank for so many years I guess people just think I've started drinking again."

DO YOU THINK IT COULD BE AN EAR PROBLEM WITH REGARDS TO BALANCE?
"Hmm. I remember suffering really badly from vertigo once and having to crawl to the bathroom because my balance was even worse than usual. I'm very prone to bronchitis. I get it at least once a year and in this instance it just wouldn't clear up and I was taking different antibiotics. My doctor told me to take this steroid for five days and then to stop taking it. I think that may have had something to do with the vertigo because I read that you shouldn't just stop taking the medication. Still, at least it cleared up my lungs!"

> "I THINK WE HAVE A REALLY GOOD RELATIONSHIP NOW. I TEXT PAUL BACK AND FORTH AND WE'VE WORKED TOGETHER, AS I HAVE WITH GENE. IT WOULD BE NICE TO GO BACK OUT WITH THEM AGAIN, BUT IT'S NOT MY CALL. I WOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER IT, BUT THE MONEY WOULD HAVE TO BE RIGHT. I HAVE A GUT FEELING IT WILL HAPPEN."

YOU WERE REUNITED WITH PAUL AND GENE AS RECENTLY AS OCTOBER 2018 ON THE KISS KRUISE, WHERE YOU ALSO PERFORMED A SOLO SET WITH YOUR BAND. WAS THAT FUN OR STRESSFUL?
"Oh, it was definitely fun. [Kiss manager] Doc McGhee came into my cabin just after the boat had left port and asked me if I wanted to do an acoustic set with Paul, Gene, Bruce Kulick, Tommy Thayer and Eric Singer. I was just getting unpacked and wasn't really prepared at all, but I just had to jump up and do it straight away. I wish I'd had an electric guitar, though, as I really couldn't get the solos quite right because the strings on the acoustic were too heavy."

Ace performing with Kiss in 1981 shortly before he left for the first time

WE CAN'T NOT ASK YOU ABOUT THAT FACEBOOK POST, THE ONE IN WHICH YOU DECLARED "THE GLOVES ARE OFF." I MEAN, CLAIMING THAT SIMMONS GROPED YOUR WIFE RACHAEL IS A PRETTY EXTREME ACCUSATION, ISN'T IT?

"What pissed me off about Gene was that whenever he goes public he states I was fired. Peter was fired. I always quit the band. It infuriates me. The fans know the truth. With regards that Facebook post, there was some stuff between Gene and Rachael that was a little unpleasant. But as far as that statement goes, I've since removed myself from that situation."

DO YOU SHARE GENE'S OFTEN-REPEATED VIEWS ON THE DEMISE OF THE ROCK SCENE?

"I don't know why he says that. Rock'n'roll is alive and well. He gets caught up in bashing people. It's a side of his personality I've never liked, this 'holier than thou' attitude. I mean, he's spent the last 40 years being down on drugs and alcohol and now he's a spokesman for a marijuana company [Invictus MD Strategies] and you can buy Kiss wine. It's hypocritical. He speaks without thinking, so you just take everything he says with a grain of salt."

"But I know the other side of Gene. He's a sweet guy. It's not widely known, but I had a facelift before the '96 reunion tour and I was about to leave hospital to go to a retreat for celebrities to stay for a week to recover from having the plastic surgery. I was laying there on my hospital bed about to depart when Gene shows up just at the same time the hospital orderly comes along to tell me the limo is downstairs and goes to put me in a wheelchair. This is something they do in the States. I don't know if it's standard practice in England too, to stop the hospital being sued if you slip on the way out. Anyway, Gene says to the orderly 'I don't want to see Ace in a wheelchair'. He picks me up and carries me outside to the car. That's the side of Gene many people don't see. He's a caring guy."

KISS'S FAREWELL TOUR IS WELL AND TRULY UNDERWAY AND PRODUCTION-WISE IT'S AN ABSOLUTE MONSTER OF SHOW. BUT THERE ARE REPORTS OF PAUL LIP-SYNCHING. DO YOU HAVE A VIEW ON THAT?

"I really don't have a view on whether Paul is lip-synching or not, because I've not seen them perform on this tour. I've never seen Kiss perform without me in the band. I would think that Paul would have more respect for the fans than to do that, but what I can tell you is that he performed a great vocal on 'Fire And Water' on my 'Origins, Vol. 1' album. It brought tears to my eyes when he e-mailed me the vocal and I first heard his work. We subsequently did the video together, which was a lot of fun. It was an absolute pleasure to work with him on that track."

I'M SURE THAT MOST KISS FANS WOULD THINK THAT YOU AND PETER SHOULD BE A PART OF THE FINAL SHOW, WHEREVER AND WHENEVER IT IS. IF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WERE RIGHT, WOULD YOU DO IT?

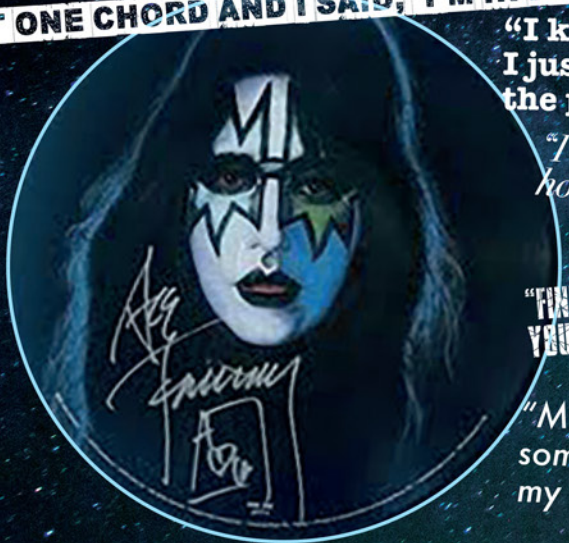
"Like I said, if it was proposed and the money was right then I'd do it. It would be exciting, not just for me but also the fans. I remember that opening night at Dodgers Stadium when we got back together in 1996 was so surreal. With the make-up and the outfits I really felt like I'd time-travelled back to the '70s. It just seemed effortless. So if it was like that in '96, then it would be the same now. I know all the moves, I know all the cues. I haven't worn the make-up since I did a Dunkin' Donuts commercial in 2007, and I don't relish putting it back on, because I'd have to shave off my beard, but I'm sure it would become really easy pretty quickly!"

Photos: Getty Images/Robin Platzer/IMAGES; Getty Images/Luciano Viti

ACE ON ACE

The world according to The Spaceman via his finest quotes over the years...

"I WENT TO MY FRIEND'S HOUSE ONE DAY AND HE HAD AN ELECTRIC GUITAR HE'D JUST BOUGHT WITH A TINY LITTLE AMP. I TURNED THE VOLUME UP TO 10 AND I HIT ONE CHORD AND I SAID, 'I'M IN LOVE'."



"I knew I was destined to be a rock star. I just knew it. I've always had the power of foresight."

"I can't even read notes. But I can teach someone how to make a guitar smoke."

"FINDING A GOOD BAND IS LIKE FINDING A GOOD WIFE. YOU GOT TO KEEP TRYING TILL YOU FIND THE RIGHT ONE."

"My life has been a rollercoaster ride, but somehow I've always been able to land on my feet and still play the guitar."

"Pete Townshend taught me how to play rhythm guitar. Townshend can play the same chord in 20 different places on the neck. It really advanced my style and my chord work, and it helped me as a songwriter."

"BY THE TIME I'M 40 INTERPLANETARY TRAVEL WILL BE COMMON. NOBODY WILL WANT TO TALK TO ME ANYWAY."

"I don't like to practise. I like spontaneity. When I don't play guitar for a week and I pick it up again, I play better."

"I DON'T SEE THIS PLANET BEING... THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT HOW THEY'RE TURNING AROUND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS HERE, BUT I THINK IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE."

"I SEE UFOS EVERY DAY."

"MY LIFE, MY CAREER, HAS BEEN LIKE A ROLLERCOASTER. I'VE EITHER BEEN AN ENORMOUS SUCCESS OR JUST A DOWN-AND-OUT FAILURE."

"Does luck play a role in success, particularly in a creative field? Sure it does. But if you don't have the balls to give it a shot you're destined to fail."

"I personally believe this: we have only today. Yesterday's gone and tomorrow is uncertain. That's why they call it the present. And sobriety really is a gift... for those who are willing to receive it."

"IF I'D KNOWN I WOULD HAVE INFLUENCED SO MANY GUITARISTS I WOULD HAVE PRACTISED MORE."

Quotes collated by Howard Johnson. Photos: Getty Images/Steve Morley/Redferns; Getty Images/Richard Creamer/Michael Ochs Archives

ACE FREHLEY

"I have a lot of diehard fans. Ace Frehley fans and Kiss fans are the greatest fans in the world."

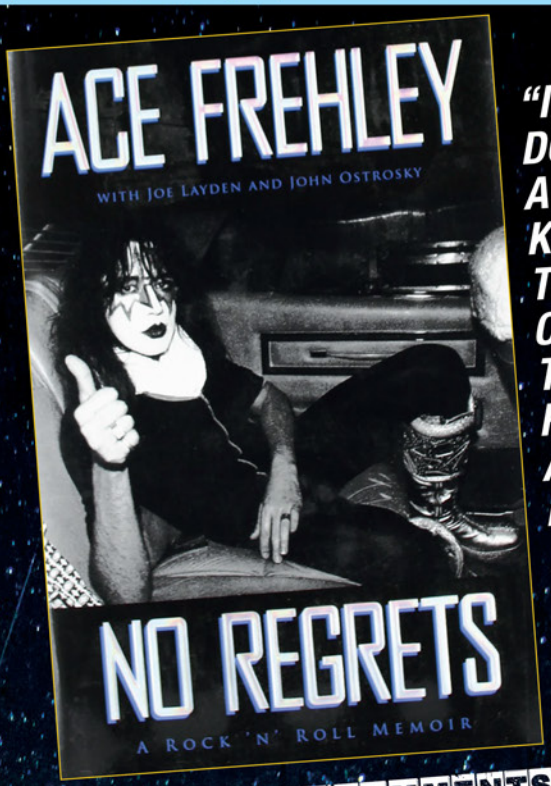
"If I'm so popular why did they replace me with Tommy Thayer?"

"I had a feeling it was gonna work out, because not only did I enjoy the music and hit it off with the guys, but I was into theatrical rock and was willing to wear make-up and do anything to make it."

"EVERY TIME GENE AND PAUL USE MY MAKE-UP THEY HAVE TO PAY ME A ROYALTY CHEQUE. I THINK THEY CHANGED THE MAKE-UP SO THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO PAY ME."

"We're there to take you away from your problems and rock and roll all nite and party every day for those two hours you're at the concert."

"FOR ME IT'S ABOUT THE MUSIC. AND IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN. MAYBE FOR SOME OTHER PEOPLE IT'S MORE ABOUT MONEY."



"IF SOMEBODY DOESN'T GIVE ME A DEADLINE I'LL KEEP CHANGING THINGS FOR MONTHS ON END. SO I NEED THE DEADLINE TO RESOLVE A SONG AND SAY, 'OK, NO MORE EDITING,' BECAUSE I'LL CHANGE THE GUITAR SOLO FIVE TIMES."

"WHEN I READ COMMENTS FANS MAKE ON THE INTERNET, INVARIABLY 80-90 PERCENT OF KISS FANS WANT A FULL-BLOWN REUNION. THERE'S NO WAY KISS IS GONNA GO OUT WITH A BANG WITH THE LINE-UP THEY HAVE NOW. IT'S HALF OF A COVER BAND."

"WHEN YOU TAKE A SHOWER IN SPACE YOU HAVE TO PRESS THE WATER ONTO YOUR BODY TO CLEAN YOURSELF, AND THEN YOU GOTTA VACUUM IT OFF."

"ONCE YOU SEE A KISS SHOW YOU KINDA GET SPOILED, BECAUSE I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYBODY OUT THERE THAT'S DOING A BIGGER OR BETTER SHOW THAN US."

"I've never read anything about heroin where, yeah, it's a good experience, and you can do it for 20 years and enjoy it, like having a cold beer. It doesn't work that way with heroin."

"I never set my sights low. I believe people are ruined by the limitations they put on themselves. I was never afraid to take that step, to see what I was capable of doing."

"IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO WALK IN A ROOM AND KNOW EVERYBODY KIND OF LOOKS UP TO YOU, BECAUSE I GUESS I'VE EARNED IT."

Photos: Getty Images/Mark Weiss; Getty Images/Richard Creamer/Michael Ochs Archives

BANDS AND BRANDS

We all know that a logo is a vital part of any rock group's image. So what's the story behind these classic visuals?

REMEMBER WHEN YOU USED to have your favourite band's logo on your denim jacket or a much loved T-Shirt? If you do, then you're bound to understand why logos are important. At the time you might simply have thought that the Iron Maiden or Scorpions logo looked cool. But in many ways those logos were doing important yet subtle work, allowing you to identify with a brand that was – and still is – important to you.

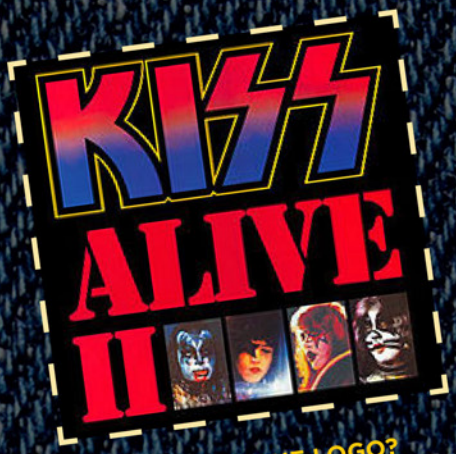
Nowadays major corporations spend huge sums of money developing their logos and brand identities. Rock bands were already doing the same thing on a smaller scale decades ago. Bands that had a great logo and stuck with it had a much more powerful marketing tool at their disposal than those who changed the way their band name was represented from album to album. It's no coincidence that Kiss and Iron Maiden, for example, have endured even through lean times when their music was either not very fashionable or simply not very good.

The origin of the word logo goes back to the early days of printing. When hot metal typesetting was used – the process of creating metal letters and then putting ink on them to print – a 'logotype' was an entire word or even an expression that had been cast as one single piece of metal. Individual letters were preferred for their obvious flexibility, but if certain phrases or words were used repeatedly, it was sensible to cast them as a single item. Logotype was shortened to logo and eventually became synonymous with a trademark design.

It looks like the first band to make use of a recognised, consistent design was US psychedelic rock band Love, whose looping logo (created by Elektra art director William S Harvey) first appeared way back in March of 1966. On their first two albums, 'Love' and 'Da Capo', both released in 1966, the distinct cartoonish letters were rendered vertically, before 1967's 'Forever Changes' saw the horizontal styling we still recognise today.

Yet the first band logo that was specifically created to brand a group was for 1960s manufactured pop outfit The Monkees. Although it didn't appear on a record sleeve until 1967 on their second album 'More Of The Monkees', the logo was, in fact, designed the year before by Nick LoBianco. LoBianco was following instructions from Ed Justin, the publicity man at the TV company that had invested in a series of slapstick comedy shows based around the band. His clever use of the band's name as a guitar with heart-shaped guitar pegs, also using the O as the sound hole of the guitar, went on to adorn hundreds of promotional items, from pyjamas to bubble gum and on to lunchboxes. Apparently, LoBianco was paid just $75 for the logo.

Having cottoned on to the fact that a band/brand identity could help drive both recognition and revenue, wise rock bands – such as the Rolling Stones – have been keen to have their own distinctive logo ever since. Here we'll take a look at some of the most iconic branding in hard rock music...



WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?

The band's guitarist Ace Frehley, who had been encouraged to develop an interest in graphic art by a careers officer at his Bronx high school.

WHAT'S THE STORY?

Frehley came up with the idea for a logo featuring two lightning bolts, supposedly drawing out a rough version on a napkin in a New York restaurant.

"I did the logo with a felt tip pen for a couple of early Kiss ads," Frehley says. "And then when it came time to do our first record, since [band member] Paul [Stanley] was artistically trained, he took my design and cleaned it up with a rapidograph pen."

Frehley showed how the Kiss logo would work by writing it across a poster for Wicked Lester, Stanley's and bassist Gene Simmons's pre-Kiss band. The WL logo apparently featured a lightning bolt.

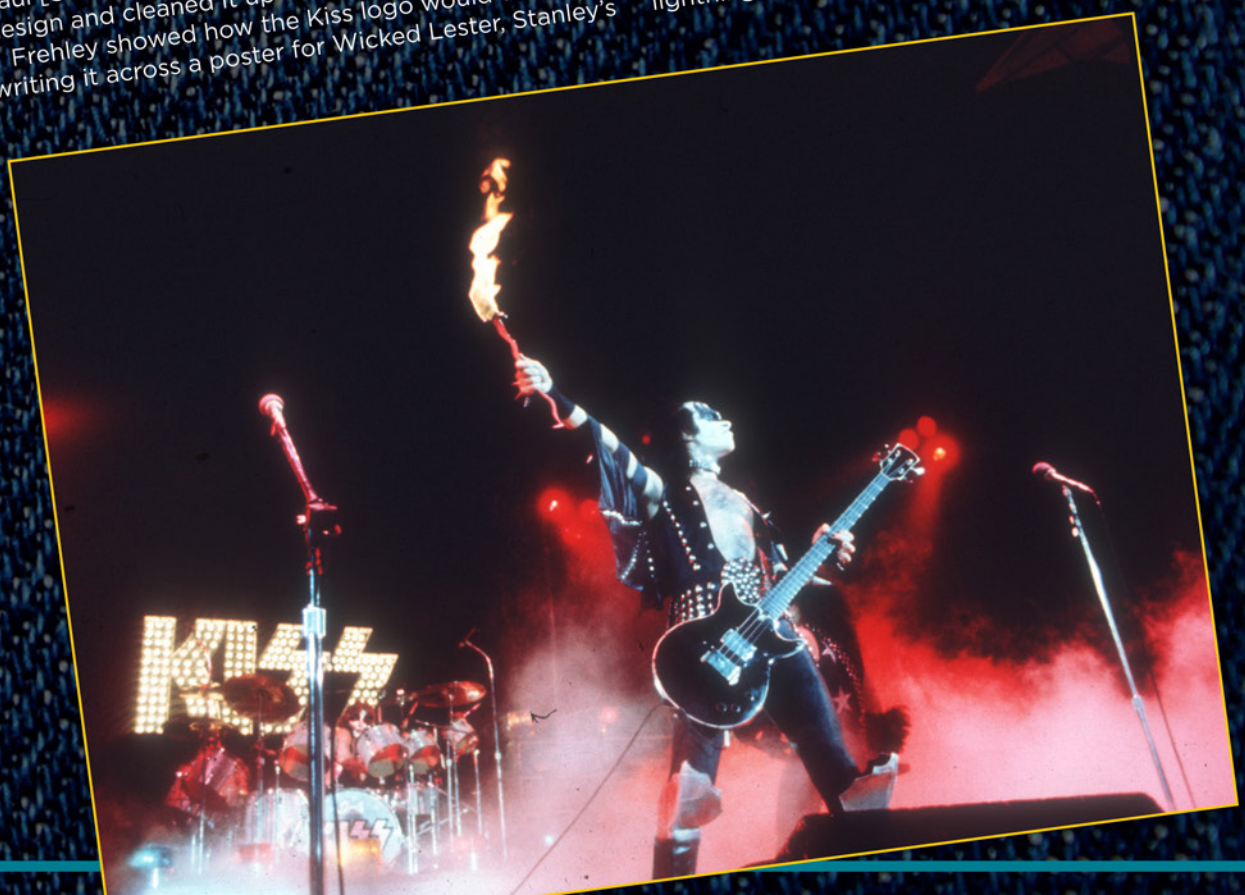
WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?

The logo was used on the band's debut album 'Kiss', released on Casablanca on 18 February 1974. It has featured on every one of the band's 20 studio albums since, though never again in the distinctive rhinestone format that featured on that first release.

DID YOU KNOW?

As Stanley himself has pointed out, his reworking of Frehley's original idea was still hand-drawn. If you look carefully, the second S is a slightly different shape to the first; it's slightly thicker. The logo was never tidied up – even after the band became mega-successful – and is now an iconic part of rock history, featuring on more than 5,000 licenced products.

Kiss's lightning bolts do bear an unfortunate similarity to the Nazi SS symbol, which has caused some controversy. It's clearly unintentional, given Simmons's and Stanley's Jewish heritage. As this symbol is now outlawed in Germany and other countries, the group use an alternative logo on all German albums and merchandise, where each lightning bolt is replaced with a backwards Z.



Words by Ross Sampson. Photo: Getty Images/Richard Creamer/Michael Ochs Archives

INSIDE STORY

IRON MAIDEN

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
Dennis Wilcock, who was Iron Maiden vocalist back in September of 1977, with help from art director Ray Hollingsworth.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
Band leader Steve Harris was quick to recognise the importance of a striking band logo. He loved the Genesis logo that appeared on the 'Nursery Cryme', 'Foxtrot' and 'Genesis Live' albums from 1971, 1972 and 1973 respectively.

"I had that logo on the back of my denim jacket with a fox's head and all that," Harris said. "The actual logo was so strong." When Genesis got rid of that logo and replaced it with one that Harris didn't like as much, it made a big impression on him. "I thought, 'Well that's not what I'm gonna do with my band...' and I made sure we got a great logo and we stuck with it."

Ray Hollingsworth worked with Dennis Wilcock at a design studio called Crowes Art in London. Wilcock was the studio manager. "I can remember Dennis ordering a typeface and bringing it over to my desk!" said Ray. "I assembled and re-touched the lettering to form the logo from that type."

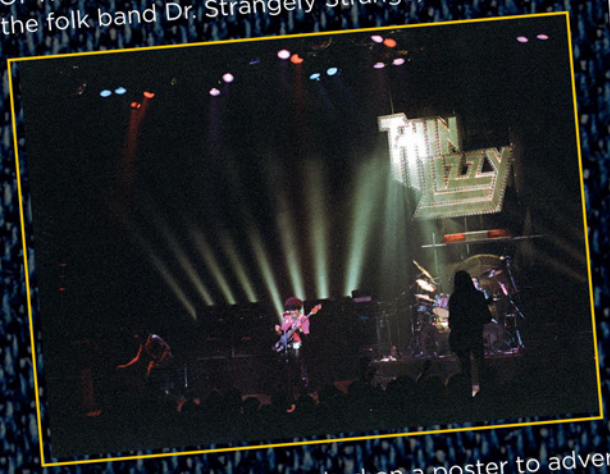
WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
On their first album for EMI, 'Iron Maiden', in 1980. But it had already been used on the band's 1979 debut EP 'The Soundhouse Tapes', released on their own Rock Hard Records label.

DID YOU KNOW?
The highly recognisable angular lettering looks very similar to the typeface used on posters for the 1976 film *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, directed by Nicolas Roeg and starring David Bowie *(left)*. It's also pretty similar to Gordon Giltrap's logo for his name on the 1976 album 'Visionary'. We know from Hollingsworth that Maiden based their logo on a font that was commercially available at the time, so it seems like the typeface Dennis and Ray adapted was the same one as had been used on the poster and album sleeve. Since that time, a downloadable font called Metal Lord has been created so you can write anything you like in the style of Maiden's logo.

Judas Priest

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
Lizzy's iconic logo was created by frontman Phil Lynott's friend, the Irish illustrator Jim FitzPatrick, who collaborated with Lizzy on over 250 items of artwork, including seven album covers.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
"The logo that appeared on 1973's 'Vagabonds Of The Western World' was by Tim Booth from the folk band Dr. Strangely Strange," Jim told *Rock Candy Mag*. "I worked on a poster to advertise a single from that album, 'The Rocker'. I used Tim's logo, but created a new typeface design for the actual words 'The Rocker'. When I showed it to Phillip he particularly liked that typeface and asked me to use it as the basis for a new Lizzy logo. He wanted to move in a harder direction with both Lizzy's music and the look and feel of the band's logo, so the harder edges and bold design reflected that."



WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
The logo first appeared on the front and back of Lizzy's fifth album, 'Fighting', in 1975, though Jim didn't design that cover. In fact there were two different covers for 'Fighting' (a different photo of the band was used on the US edition) but both versions feature Jim's logo.

DID YOU KNOW?
Jim produced a special version of the logo using the panther from the band's 'Nightlife' album cover with the logo in a circle for a French-only compilation.

"Phillip kept wanting new, original and different versions of the band logo for each album," says Jim. "As an ex-marketing guy I wanted the one logo on everything! It's taken the 33 years since Phillip died for my logo to become synonymous with Thin Lizzy."

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
Roslav Szaybo, who was the chief artistic director at the band's label, CBS Records, in 1978.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
The font used by Szaybo was created especially for a new Priest logo and is now officially called Judas Priest! The so-called 'devil's tuning fork', which was used as part of Priest's stage set from the 1990 'Painkiller' tour onwards, officially replaced the letter T in the band logo in 2003 when Rob Halford rejoined the band. It's still used as part of the Priest logo today.

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
In 1978 on Priest's fourth album, 'Stained Class', their second for major label CBS/Columbia.

DID YOU KNOW?
There were two different logos used on the first three Priest albums (one for 'Rocka Rolla' in 1974, another for both 'Sad Wings Of Destiny' in 1976 and 'Sin After Sin' in 1977) before the iconic Szaybo design appeared on 'Stained Class'. Whenever Szaybo's logo now appears on an album cover it's always at an angle, never horizontal.

It's actually Roslav Szaybo's own hand gripping the razor on the album cover for 1980's 'British Steel'. And Szaybo also designed that cover as well, one of five sleeves he produced for Priest.

For the two albums that Priest made without Rob Halford – 1997's 'Jugulator' and 2001's 'Demolition' – two different logos were used. The 'classic' Priest logo, with the devil's fork update, returned for 2005's 'Angel of Retribution.'

Photos: Getty Images/Paul Natkin; Getty Images/Peter Still/Redferns; Getty Images/Michael Putland

INSIDE STORY

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
The classic AC/DC logo was a collaborative effort between Bob Defrin, who was the creative director at their label Atlantic, and designer Gerard Huerta back in 1977.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
"I designed many pieces of art for Bob and his label," Gerard Huerta told *Rock Pop Gallery* back in 2006. "AC/DC was on the label and I'd first drawn some lightning bolt-style lettering for an earlier album titled 'High Voltage'. It was my typographical interpretation of the title. I'd worked on a live album by Blue Öyster Cult [1975's 'On Your Feet Or On Your Knees'] and created a metallic logo. I thought the same typeface would work well for AC/DC, except in a fiery red/orange colour to more suit the album and the band."

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
On 1977's 'Let There Be Rock', which was the band's fourth to be released in Australia and their third internationally.

DID YOU KNOW?
Huerta based the typeface on the writing style he'd first seen in the *Gutenberg Bible*, one of the first printed books. His intention was to create a logo to match the Biblical-style lyrics the band used in the song 'Let There Be Rock'.

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
Metallica founder member James Hetfield originally produced a hand-drawn version of the famous jagged typeface.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
"In the beginning when we were thinking about the band and how we were going to conquer the world with music, I started a sketch on a napkin and worked on it until it was ready," Hetfield told US talk show host Jimmy Kimmel in 2016. "I was a perfectionist and had done four years of draughting [technical drawing] in high school. I created the logo by hand, used a ruler and everything!"

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
On Metallica's first independent album, 'Kill 'Em All', back in 1983. However, it had already featured on business cards that were handed out by Hetfield in the early '80s, long before the band had a recording contract.

DID YOU KNOW?
Metallica experimented with a logo change for 1996's 'Load', but the somewhat blander version that appeared didn't go down well with the fans. The stabbing 'M' and 'A' were reinstated for 2003's 'St Anger', though only on the sticker that appeared on the album cover!

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
The iconic Zeppelin logo was designed in 1973 by the famous partnership of Storm Thorgerson and Aubrey Powell, who ran the legendary Hipgnosis design agency.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
The logo was created for use as part of the cover art for the 1973 album 'Houses Of The Holy'. The font itself was hand-drawn rather than using a typeface that already existed. The letters are different sizes – even the same repeated letters are sometimes different in the logo – suggesting the experimental, ever-changing nature of Zep's music.

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
In 1973, but not on 'Houses Of The Holy' after all, rather on merchandise and tour programmes. The album didn't feature any typography at all on the front sleeve of the gatefold cover, although a Japanese-style paper band – known as an Obi strip – was added with this identifying logo for a brief period on a later pressing.

DID YOU KNOW?
This famous Zep logo didn't appear printed directly on any of Led Zeppelin's studio albums released while the band was still together. It did, however, appear on the sleeve of the 1976 live album 'The Song Remains The Same'. You can't discuss the Zep logo without mentioning the winged figure that adorned the group's Swan Song vinyl label. This was rendered by artist and illustrator Joe Petagno and is based on a 19th century painting by American artist William Rimmer titled 'Evening (Fall Of The Day)'. See the feature in *Rock Candy Mag* Issue 9 if you want to find out more about that.

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
The simplistic original design, most remarkable for the typically heavy metal use of umlauts over the Ö and the Ü, was a collaborative effort between all four band members, Nikki Sixx, Mick Mars, Vince Neil and Tommy Lee.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
Vince Neil was quoted on *Ultimate Classic Rock* website as saying: "When we came up with the name we didn't even know what umlauts were. We were drinking Löwenbräu beer and when we decided to call ourselves Mötley Crüe we put some umlauts in there because we thought it made us look European. We had no idea that it was a pronunciation thing. When we finally went to Germany the crowds were chanting 'Mutley Cruh, Mutley Cruh'. We couldn't figure out why the f*ck they were doing that."

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
This logo was first seen on Mötley's 1981, independent debut album 'Too Fast For Love'.

DID YOU KNOW?
There have been no less than nine different versions of the Mötley Crüe logo since the band formed, and many have been wildly different. The only constant has been those heavy metal umlauts on the Ö and the Ü, originally instigated by guitarist Mick Mars!

Photos: Getty Images/Ebet Roberts/Redferns; Getty Images/Ian Dickson/Redferns; Getty Images/Ross Marino; Getty Images/Chris Walter/WireImage

INSIDE STORY

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?

Blake Edwards – who was a friend of guitarist and Slayer founder Kerry King – created the band's logo back in 1981.

WHAT'S THE STORY?

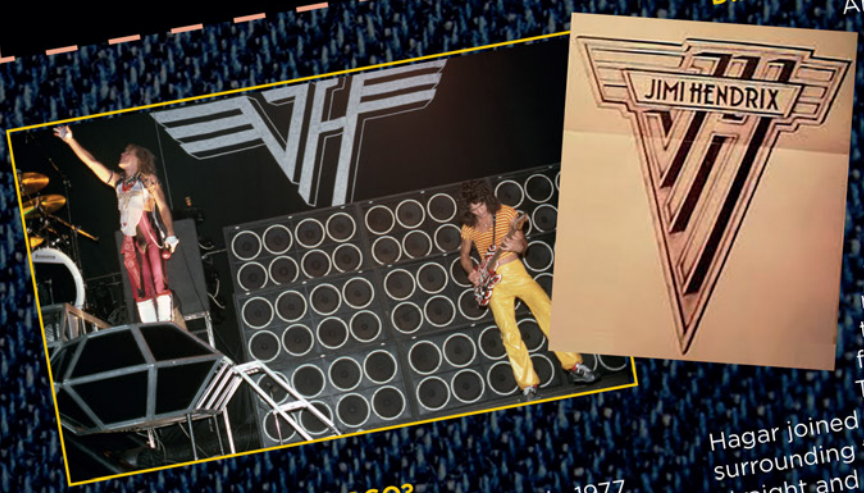
Blake sketched the logo on a document folder he happened to have with him, with the intention of working up the lettering later on. However, the band ended up leaving the logo the way it was. The pentagram is actually incomplete, as it only has four swords. A fifth sword that could complete the pentagram is held by a goat-headed creature on the cover image of first album 'Show No Mercy' from 1983.

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?

On 'Show No Mercy' more than 35 years ago.

DID YOU KNOW?

Designer Chris Hansen created a font that he named Slaytanic based on the original logo by Blake Edwards. It only features capital letters as there are only capitals in the logo. The pentagram part of the Slayer logo was dropped from album covers in 1988 after the first four releases ('Show No Mercy', 'Hell Awaits', 'Reign In Blood' and 'South Of Heaven'). Around the time of 1990's 'Seasons In The Abyss' the Slayer logo debuted on a stylised eagle, at the suggestion of band producer Rick Rubin, though it didn't feature on the cover of that particular album. The current Slayer logo – last seen on 2015's 'Repentless' – is simply the Slaytanic letters in red.



WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
Korean American illustrator Dave Bhang in 1977.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
"I received a call from Ted Templeman," Bhang explained on his website, "a producer from Warner Bros. Records, asking if I was free to come into his office to meet an up-and-coming group named Van Halen. Ted told me on the phone that he thought this would be the hottest band in the country once their first album was released – and I was to design the cover. It was to be done in less than a week, because the album was almost finished. I was used to working under these tight deadlines and wasn't fazed until upon leaving Eddie asks '...and can you design a logo for us too?'!"

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
On the seminal debut album 'Van Halen' in 1978.

DID YOU KNOW?
An original cover for the first album, together with an accompanying logo, had been designed by Warner Bros. But both were rejected wholesale by the band. Dave Bhang and his photographer friend Elliot Gilbert eventually created the iconic images on the cover and that all-important VH logo. Recent research has focused on its similarity to a vintage Jimi Hendrix logo (*left*) featured, at the time, on live posters. The logo was adapted when Sammy Hagar joined the band in 1985 and the 'wings' surrounding the VH lettering went from being straight and short to wrapping round as a full circle to announce his arrival. When original singer David Lee Roth rejoined Van Halen for 2012's 'A Different Kind Of Truth' the band reverted to the original logo for the album sleeve.

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
Original Aerosmith guitarist Ray 'Crazy Raymond' Tabano, who was 'Smiths vocalist Steven Tyler's childhood best friend.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
The wings symbol represents freedom and movement, the circled letter A in the centre is the symbol of anarchy, while the band name written in psychedelic style is a deliberate tie-in to the band's late '60s roots. The overall design is also a clear homage to the classic US Flying A gasoline station logo, which had the wings and the A in the same position as the Aerosmith logo.

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
Ray's original, somewhat unsophisticated version of the logo first appeared on Aerosmith's second album, 1974's 'Get Your Wings'. The band first used the 'classic' 'Smith logo on 1978's 'Live! Bootleg', but it wasn't until 1987's 'Permanent Vacation' that it became a permanent feature on all Aerosmith album sleeves.

DID YOU KNOW?
Ray actually created the first logo after he was fired from the band in 1971 and went on to set up Aerosmith's fan club, where he got the chance to help design merchandise and write the official band newsletters. The name of the font that's nearest to the one Tabano created is Aero Font One!

Ray later reworked the name Aerosmith into its current sinuous style. It first featured, in isolation, on the band's third album, 1975's 'Toys In The Attic'. Later he merged it with the wings and encircled A to create the design we all know and love today.

Photos: Getty Images/Chris Walter/WireImage; Getty Images/Michael Ochs Archives; Getty Images/Andrew Putler/Redferns

INSIDE STORY

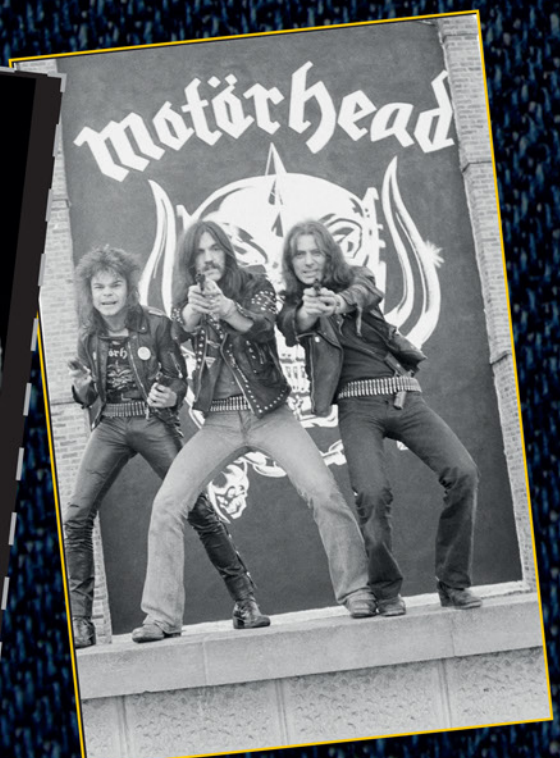
UFO

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
British designer Geoff Halpin, whose previous credits included the cover of the 1977 eponymous debut album by Irish punks The Boomtown Rats.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
"It was the usual thing, fifty quid and had to be done in five minutes," Halpin said. "I had this idea about interrupted imagery, like you're watching TV and aliens have taken it over, so it all goes a bit wonky. I made it by setting the letters in type and then chopping it up, drawing the interference lines by hand, pasting it together and then taking a photograph of it. If you zoom in, it's actually not very well drawn, but in a way, I quite like that because now with computers, everything is done to death. I quite like the idea that you can see it's been done by a human being and not a machine."

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
After six albums and three different logos, UFO first used this iconic piece of work on 'Obsession' in 1978. It has been used by the band ever since.

DID YOU KNOW?
This logo was originally commissioned by the legendary Storm Thorgerson, the driving force behind the Hipgnosis design agency that produced many of the iconic rock sleeves of the 1970s, including work for Led Zeppelin, the Scorpions, Pink Floyd and, of course, UFO.



WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
American designer Kent Joshpe, who now owns the Antithesis advertising agency in Rochester, New York.

WHAT'S THE STORY?
"I used to always draw these caricatures of all my friends," says Kent. "I knew Danny Spitz personally, so when the guys formed Anthrax he asked me if I'd do the logo and their first album cover. I think I was somewhat influenced by Iron Maiden's logo, but I tried not to look at too many others, because I didn't want it to feel like anyone else's."

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
On the band's debut, 1984's 'Fistful of Metal', released on the Megaforce label.

DID YOU KNOW?
Joshpe was a big fan of American graphic designer Herb Lubalin, who co-created Avant Garde Gothic, one of the first typefaces to incorporate ligatures, which are letter forms that connect. They're used in the Anthrax logo and many others in the rock and metal arena.

Anthrax mainman Scott Ian loved the logo Joshpe came up with, but hated 'Fistful Of Metal's cartoony album sleeve image of a chainmailed fist exploding out of someone's mouth. "It's horrible," he says, succinctly..

WHO DESIGNED THE LOGO?
American graphic artist Joe Petagno designed the famous 'Snaggletooth' logo in 1977 after discussing ideas with Motörhead frontman Lemmy in a pub on London's Great Western Road.

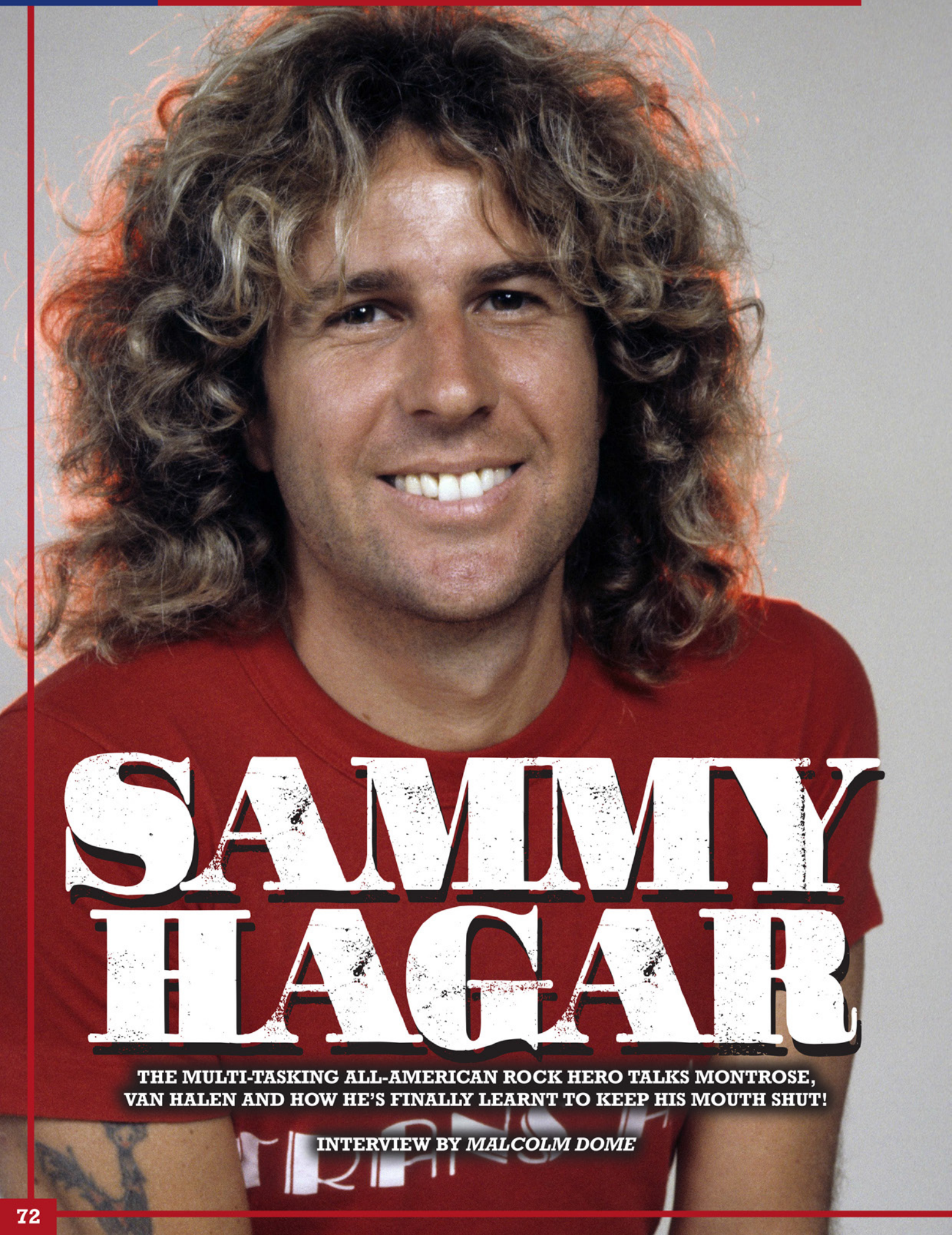
WHAT'S THE STORY?
"Taking my cue from outlaw biker patches, I was looking for skulls and bones when I inadvertently came across a book of animal skulls," Petagno told *Metal Hammer*. "Then it hit me; an animal skull would work better than a human skull. I thought, why not invent a new skull, a hybrid? In the end I settled on a dog or wolf and gorilla cranium and gave it over-sized wild boar teeth. I hung a chain from the horns left to right under it and a small human skull to designate size, adorned it with an iron cross as a sign of bravery and then topped it off with a few spikes. It was shocking and made people stand up and take notice, made them want to check out the music, first through the eyes, then to the ears, so to speak."

WHEN DID IT FIRST APPEAR ON AN ALBUM?
It first came to our attention, fearsome and magnificent, on the iconic cover of Motörhead's eponymous debut album in 1977.

.

DID YOU KNOW?
Lemmy had just left Hawkwind and ask Petagno to create a logo for his new band that was going to be called Bastard. He later changed his mind and decided to call the band Motörhead in honour of the last song he wrote before being fired from Hawkwind. The initial 'Snaggletooth' design featured a swastika on one of the spikes on the helmet, but this was later removed on reissue artwork.

Photos: Getty Images/Jorgen Angel; Getty Images/Brian Rasic; Getty Images/Estate of Keith Morris/Redferns



SAMMY HAGAR

THE MULTI-TASKING ALL-AMERICAN ROCK HERO TALKS MONTROSE, VAN HALEN AND HOW HE'S FINALLY LEARNT TO KEEP HIS MOUTH SHUT!

INTERVIEW BY *MALCOLM DOME*

EARLY DAYS

"I see myself as a seeker and as a late bloomer – and I'm still learning and growing as an artist. I'm inspired by so much, not just music, and that's what I've always been about, right from the beginning. In my younger days I was heavily into Mick Jagger and Rod Stewart. Those two guys were lucky, because they knew what they wanted to be from their teens. I wasn't like that, so I was always trying to find where I fitted. I was a rocker, sure. But I was also folky and bluesy. But then I discovered Paul Rodgers through Free, and even though Paul was a couple of years younger than me he had a huge impact on my approach. Getting into what Paul was doing definitely changed my style. I doubt I'll ever get to my musical destination, though. But I'm a lot closer now than I've ever been."

"I SEE MYSELF ABOVE ALL AS A SINGER WHO PLAYS GUITAR. JIMI HENDRIX WAS A GUITARIST WHO SANG. THE SAME IS TRUE OF ERIC CLAPTON. BUT THAT'S NOT ME. FOR ME THE VOCALS ALWAYS COME FIRST."

GUITAR PLAYER? SINGER?

"I see myself above all as a singer who plays guitar. Jimi Hendrix was a guitarist who sang. The same is true of Eric Clapton. But that's not me. For me the vocals always come first."

MONTROSE

"I always felt that the band's label, Warner Bros., never quite knew what to do with us. We were the first band of that type they'd signed and very little money was spent on us. But then a few years later along came Van Halen and Warners lavished an absolute fortune on marketing them. I do wish they'd done something similar with Montrose, but these days it doesn't overly bother me. I don't think we even scratched the surface of what that band could achieve. I wish [guitarist] Ronnie Montrose had been in a different headspace back then. He saw Montrose as being old-fashioned and didn't envisage the big wave that was gonna come along on the back of Van Halen. That's why he split the band up. I desperately wanted to do a third Montrose album on the back of [1973's] 'Montrose' and [1974's] 'Paper Money'. Who knows what we might have done if we'd really pressed on at that stage?"

RELATIONSHIP WITH RONNIE MONTROSE

"My relationship with Ronnie was rather up and down. Sometimes he would confide in me. When he was feeling insecure he'd take me to one side and ask my opinion about what the band should do. But then he'd turn on me and tell the others, 'Oh, Hagar wants us to have a big production and wear make-up like Bowie.' He would stab me in the back. The last time I talked to Ronnie was just before he died in 2012. I invited him down to my Mexican restaurant and nightclub, Cabo Wabo, for my birthday. We had musicians getting up to play and I put the idea forward of getting the original Montrose line-up together for a reunion that night. You know what Ronnie said? 'Every time you need to sell tickets you call me.' There were only ever 500 tickets available for that night and it was already long-since sold out. But that didn't stop Ronnie from seeing me as *needing* his involvement!"

SOLO CAREER

"Montrose had always been an opening act, except in San Francisco and Paris, bizarrely. So America really didn't want to know me when I went solo in the '70s. But for some reason I could come over to Britain and do great business. I was selling records and doing two sold-out nights at every venue between 1977 and 1979. I loved going over there to tour. The crowds were 90 per cent male, which wasn't exactly appealing to me, but the fans were so intense and they really got what I was about. They kept me going. But the odd thing was that when I began to have big US success in the early '80s, the UK audience suddenly didn't want to know me. As I became bigger in the States, so I lost touch with the British fans. I didn't come over any more, because I was only able to do three or four dates – and that was a waste of my time."

EARLY PRODUCER CARTER

"Listen, I love John Carter [who produced Hagar's first three solo albums; 'Nine On A Ten Scale' in 1976, followed by 'Sammy Hagar' and 'Musical Chairs' in

Photos: Getty Images/Richard McCaffrey

RAPID FIRE RECALL

1977]. The man was so supportive of me when I first went solo. He signed me to Capitol when no other label showed any interest in me, but I have to admit that he also held me back somewhat. I wanted to be a rocker, but he saw me as having hit singles. So he kept pushing me to do inappropriate covers, or took songs that I'd written and tried to revamp them to be more chart friendly. Plus he wasn't a good producer back then, and that meant that the records he worked on with me didn't sound very good. Carter kept hiring studio engineers who just weren't up to the task. He did get a lot better latter on, but that didn't help me. Still, I miss him since he died in 2011."

"I DON'T THINK WE EVEN SCRATCHED THE SURFACE OF WHAT MONTROSE COULD ACHIEVE. I WISH RONNIE MONTROSE HAD BEEN IN A DIFFERENT HEADSPACE."

BEING 'THE RED ROCKER'

"That was never my idea. I did the eponymous album in 1977, and because it had a song called 'Red' on it, and because a lot of the colouring on the cover design was red, it became known as 'The Red Album'. Around that time there was a series of gigs that were promoted under the name 'Rising Star Concerts'. They were designed to give exposure to up-and-coming artists. Tickets cost a dollar, with the rest of the costs covered by the artists' labels. Well, I did one of those dates in Seattle and the next morning there was a fan waiting for me outside my hotel with a copy of the local paper that had a review of the gig in. The headline of the piece was 'Sammy Hagar The Red Rocker Slays The Paramount Theater'. The fan asked me to sign the article, but he wanted me to put 'Sammy Hagar The Red Rocker'. That was the start of it. From then on, people would shout 'Red Rocker' at me from across the street – and it stuck."

GEFFEN RECORDS

"I owe a lot to John Kalodner, who signed me to Geffen in the early '80s. For a start, he got Keith Olsen to produce the 'Standing Hampton' album in 1981. At the time Olsen was one of the biggest and best producers around. Kalodner also made sure I had the finest engineers working with me, and that made a huge difference. Kalodner insisted that I didn't go into the studio until I had 10 or 12 top quality songs ready. More than that, he also told me that I shouldn't tour until the album was completely done, however long that took. At Capitol it had been a case of rushing into the studio, recording an album and then heading back on the road as soon as possible. With Geffen I took a year out just to write. Every so often Kalodner would come over to listen to what I had, and if something caught his ear he would tell me it was a keeper. It was this process that helped make me a lot more commercially aware. John Kalodner turned me into a proper recording artist."

THE BAND HSAS

"Neal Schon and I used to jam all the time. Sure, he was known for his melodic guitar playing with Journey, but there was so much more to him. That's why he loved jamming so much, because that was where he could express all those other sides of his musical talents. And that's where the idea for HSAS [Hagar, Schon, Aaronson, Shrieve] came from. We got hold of Kenny Aaronson, who was an amazing bassist, and Michael Shrieve, who was a brilliant drummer. We wrote some songs and then did seven shows locally in San Francisco, where we played the stuff we'd written, as well as material that we'd done as individuals previously. I really enjoyed the writing process. I'd just come back from a trip to Africa and that inspired most of the lyrics. A lot of it was about my reaction to being there. In a way, it was conceptual.

"We never thought of ourselves as a supergroup, but rather as a bunch of mates having fun. We put out the 'Through The Fire' album in 1984, but to be honest it sounded sh*tty. All of us were multi-million selling artists at the time. So, what does the HSAS album sell? Only about 100,000 copies. It was a total flop."

VAN HALEN

"I reckon me joining Van Halen in 1985 was down to the fact that I'm a 10-year kinda guy. Every decade or so I have to change things. Don't tell my wife, though! No,

Sammy with Van Halen in 1985. L-R: Michael Anthony (bass), Eddie Van Halen (guitar), Alex Van Halen (drums), Sammy Hagar (vocals and guitar)

Chickenfoot L-R: Chad Smith (drums), Sammy Hagar (vocals and guitar), Michael Anthony (bass), Joe Satriani (guitar)

we're OK. We've been married for 26 years now! So after a decade being solo and despite my success I was simply getting bored. I'd just finished the 'VOA' tour, which had done huge business. But something inside me was nagging away. I felt like I no longer enjoyed being a solo artist. I'd met Eddie Van Halen a few times, and one day he called me out of the blue. He'd gotten my number through a mutual contact, a guy who ran the garage in LA where I'd taken my car to be repaired. Eddie had seen it there and got talking to that guy, because he used the same place for his own cars. Eddie asked who owned the car, because he liked the way it looked. That's where fate intervened, because Van Halen were looking for a new singer, and so this person in the garage told Eddie the car belonged to me and then suggested I'd be perfect to replace David Lee Roth. He even gave Eddie my number. I ended up jamming with Van Halen and came away with a cassette recording of what we'd done. I have to admit I wasn't convinced it was the right move to join – until I played the tape. There were early versions of what turned into 'Good Enough' and 'Summer Nights' on the '5150' album [from 1986] and they sounded so good – just like Cream. That's when I knew I *had* to join. Van Halen were about to repeat themselves, which can happen to any band after they've been going for a while, but I believe I stopped that from happening. Both of us were at our peak and it turned out to be a good move all round. We got 10 fine years out of it."

> "I RECKON ME JOINING VAN HALEN IN 1985 WAS DOWN TO THE FACT THAT I'M A 10-YEAR KINDA GUY. EVERY DECADE OR SO I HAVE TO CHANGE THINGS. DON'T TELL MY WIFE, THOUGH!"

THE VAN HALEN SPLIT

"It was that 10-year thing again! I was getting antsy, because I wanted to do a solo album, and the band didn't want me to. In Van Halen they insisted that I couldn't write anything on my own. It had to be a group thing. But I'd begun to write some stuff on my own and stockpile it for future use. Then the Sammy Hagar 'Unboxed' compilation came out in 1994, which was a collection of songs from my Geffen albums. I recorded two new tracks for the project, 'High Hopes' and 'Buying My Way Into Heaven'. That didn't go down at all well. The rest of the band were really pissed at me. But we were also fighting about lots of other things. Ed Leffler was Van Halen's manager at the time and he'd looked after me as a solo artist for a long time before I joined the band. When he was alive he was great at defusing any of our arguments before they became real issues. But when he died in 1993 there was nobody around who could do a similar job. And things escalated to the point where I was out."

DAVID LEE ROTH

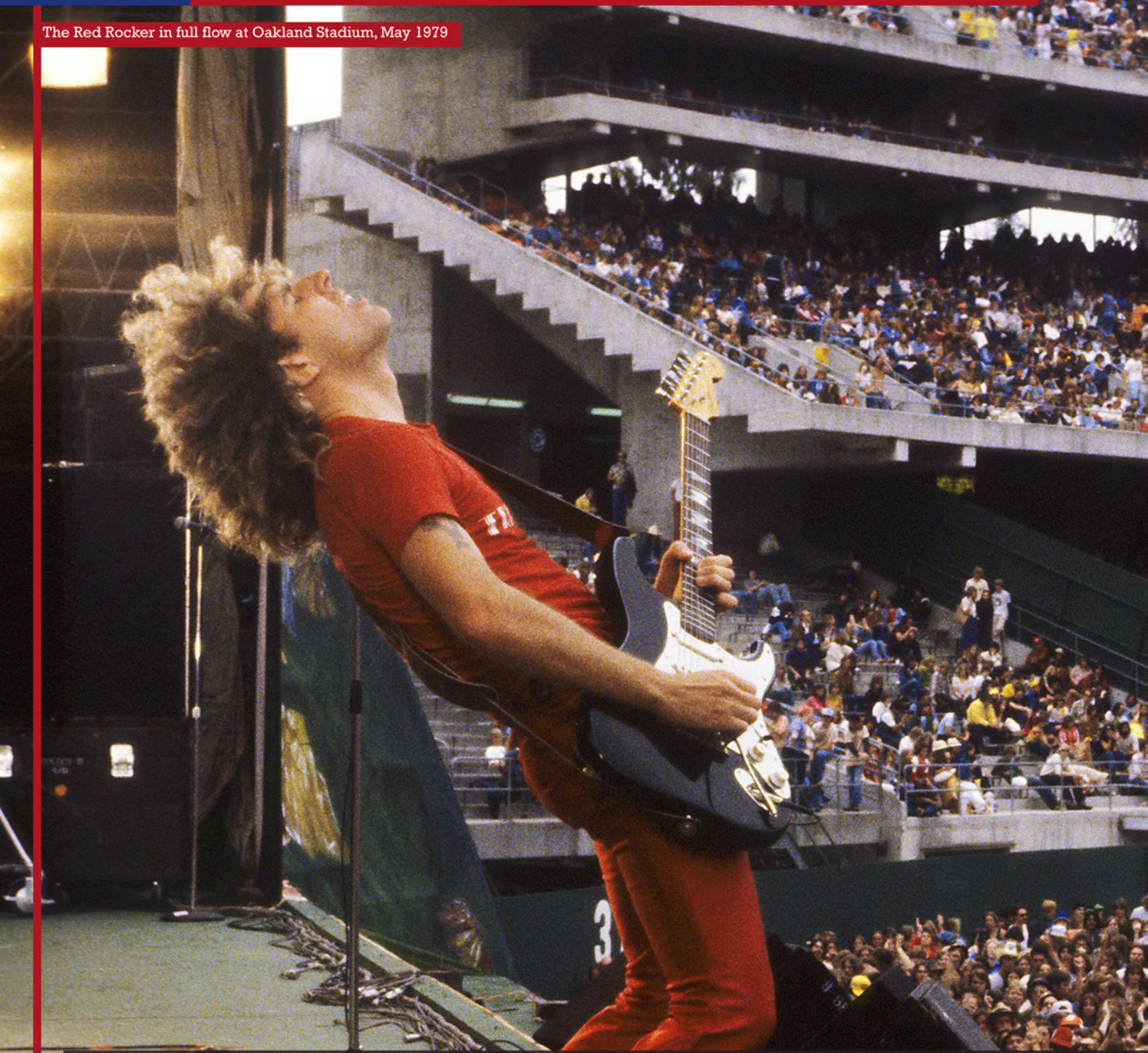
"I have to say we didn't get on when we toured together in 2002. He was still good live, unlike now when I have to say he's rather embarrassing. But the problem was that he hired a kind of Van Halen tribute band to back him, and that was cheap and stupid. How can you possibly expect people to take you seriously as a solo artist when you have such a band behind you? The tour did good business, but Dave insisted that we should take it in turns to headline. So one night I'd close the show and he would open it, and the next night our roles would be reversed. But that didn't work in his favour at all. When Dave went on first that was OK, because he did deliver a decent performance. But when I went on before him he simply couldn't follow me. I showed him up, without really meaning to."

BUSINESS PROJECTS

"I'm a thinker and often I would lie awake at night thinking of business ideas. Every so often the lightbulb in my head would go off and I would know that an idea for a business venture was going to work. That's the way I've always been with my business ventures outside of music. So the restaurants I opened like the Cabo Wabo Cantina and Sammy's Beach Bar & Grill, plus all the drinks I've helped to develop like Cabo Wabo Tequila and Sammy's Beach Bar Rum, all started out as visions in my head. But as with everything I do, if I get involved with a business project then it must be done to the most exacting of standards. If I do a tequila, then I demand that it's the best it can be. And the same goes for a hamburger. They have to meet my requirements. I've been fortunate enough to have had a lot of successful business interests, but the money isn't the driving force behind these ventures. I do it for the passion. In the '70s I will admit that I'd do things because I needed money. But thankfully those times are over."

Photos: Getty Images/Chris Walter/Wirelmage; Getty Images/Frazer Harrison

RAPID FIRE RECALL



The Red Rocker in full flow at Oakland Stadium, May 1979

TV

"Sometimes I get bored and want to do something I've never attempted before. And that's where the idea for doing a TV show came from. I needed a fresh challenge, otherwise I could be tempted to drink a lot and do drugs. So I just thought hosting a television series would be great to do. I came up with the concept of visiting rock star buddies, interviewing them and jamming out some songs. We did a pilot show of *Rock And Roll Road Trip With Sammy Hagar* and it went down well enough to turn into a series. Now we're on the fourth season [for AXS TV in America] and I think this one is the best yet. The reason is that I'm getting much better at interviewing people. I've had to learn how to listen. Usually I'm the one being interviewed, so I just talk. So it's not come easy to me to shut up and let the other person chat. But I believe I've now become good at interviewing."

CHICKENFOOT

"I love that band and I really want to do more with them. I know that [guitarist] Joe Satriani wants to do more as well. The problem we have is finding gaps in all of our schedules to get Joe, [bassist] Michael Anthony, [drummer] Chad Smith and myself together. Chad has been so busy with the Red Hot Chili Peppers, either on tour or in the studio, that he's scarcely had time to even consider any Chickenfoot activity. We did bring in Kenny Aronoff to take over from Chad for our tour back in 2011. Now Kenny's a fine drummer, but that tour proved to us that Chickenfoot is about the four of us. If any one person is missing, then the band can't be pursued.

"I want to do a third album [following on from the eponymous debut in 2009 and the oddly-named second album 'Chickenfoot III' two years later], because this is one of the best bands I've ever been in. Joe Satriani is

Photo: Getty Images/Ed Perlstein/Redferns

such a prolific songwriter and he's an absolute pleasure to collaborate with. So the best way to describe our current situation is that the band is on the backburner, but it's definitely *not* on hold."

SAMMY HAGAR AND THE CIRCLE

"This is my group right now. With Michael Anthony, Jason Bonham [drums] and Vic Johnson [guitar] I have a real band that I want to be part of. It all started out with me putting together what was supposed to be a new solo project, but I soon understood that it was going to be far more. We all have the same musical influences, and we spent five years playing live together before we did our first album, 'Space Between', this year.

"These guys can play everything. Jason... what a drummer. Both Denny Carmassi in Montrose and Alex Van Halen wanted to play like John Bonham, but neither of them can do it the way Jason can. When he plays 'Poundcake', for instance, it finally sounds right! He's not just John Bonham's son. He understands how to play that way better than anyone else I know.

"Our album is conceptual and I feel it has a meaning that reaches out to the world as it is today. There are such big divides going on everywhere around the globe. You look around and people are so polarised now. Nobody is talking to one another. Everybody believes that they are right, and that those who don't agree with them should be silenced. You know what? I'm sick of it. When I was growing up I was taught that you should never be in the middle. You had to take a side, not sit on the fence. But now I realise that's the wrong way to do things. The only salvation we have is by being in the middle. It's the 'space between' the extremes that offers a way forward."

CULT

Cult mainstays Billy Duffy (guitar) and Ian Astbury (vocals) photographed in London, 5 March 1989

LEADERS

The Cult has always been a rock band that likes to be out of step with the general movements of the time. *Howard Johnson* reckons that's why they're special. As a 30th anniversary edition of their biggest album, 'Sonic Temple', appears, he talks at length to guitarist **Billy Duffy** about the halcyon period in the '80s when the band was at the forefront of contemporary rock'n'roll...

FOR MY MONEY THE Cult are the best and most interesting British rock band of the last 35 years. Ever since their signature tune, 'She Sells Sanctuary' became a UK hit single in 1985 the band have married traditional rock roots with a punk and alternative heritage, constantly looking to stretch themselves and re-draw the demarcation lines of what guitar music can be. Not everyone has enjoyed their blending of styles. Some see The Cult as opportunists whose hearts were never in the rock world that they came to inhabit in the second half of the '80s. But I've known the band's two founder members, guitarist Billy Duffy and vocalist Ian Astbury, for as long as The Cult has existed, and have closely followed the band's progress, interviewing them many times along the way. Their two vastly differing personalities have always been at the heart of the creative push and pull that makes The Cult so interesting. I don't think The Cult have ever been opportunists. They wanted success, but they weren't built to make enough compromises to grab the really big cash prizes. As such The Cult never became stadium staples. Rather they ploughed their own furrow as stubborn rock outsiders. Whenever they've worked together Astbury and Duffy have remained constantly creative, never happy to stand still, always keen to explore new corners of guitar-based music. Not everything they've done has been brilliant. But much of it has been.

Of course those who like their rock to feel classic will get most out of the period between 1985 and 1989 when three albums – 'Love', 'Electric' and Sonic Temple' – introduced The Cult to a mainstream audience. So it's this period that I wanted to discuss in-depth with Billy Duffy when I spoke to him recently...

THE 'LOVE' ALBUM, RELEASED IN 1985, WAS THE FIRST CULT RELEASE WHERE BRITAIN'S TRADITIONAL ROCK COMMUNITY SAT UP AND TOOK NOTICE OF THE BAND.

"That's true, but what's weird about that record is that if you take the title track and 'The Phoenix' off it, then you have a very different album. Those were the last two songs written, riffs I'd come up with the week before we went in the studio. I played the riff to 'The Phoenix' and [stand in drummer at the time] Mark Brzezicki played these incredible drum fills. There are only four chords in both those songs, but what Mark did was allow me to build tunes. Plus our producer Steve Brown was open-minded enough to say, 'Why *wouldn't* you do five tracks of wah wah guitar?' 'Why *can't* we put a cowbell on a rock song?' There's cowbell all the way through 'Love'! We were up for anything that was contrary and interesting. Ian heard 'The Phoenix', said 'That's amazing, the best thing I've ever heard. I'll be right back,' and he wrote the melody and the lyrics in about half an hour. We just went with our gut."

DID YOU FEEL YOU'D FOUND YOUR NICHE AS A GUITARIST TOO?

"I think so. I had a sound, the Gretsch through Marshalls and Roland amps to make this weird, chorusy sound. I felt it might have a future. It wasn't punk. It was rock, but it was edgy."

AND THE PUBLIC RESPONDED WELL...

"That's right, but bizarrely it was right at this point when the first cracks appeared in The Cult's armour. After the 'Love' tour Ian went off and met a girl and was a bit separate from the rest of us, which changed the dynamic. But also musically things got weird. We weren't idiots, so after 'Love' we went back in the studio with Steve Brown. We went for the same procedure, went through pre-production, wrote 'Love Removal Machine', 'Wild Flower' and 'Peace Dog'. We didn't have 'Lil' Devil' at this point. Steve Brown said we were one commercial song short. We'd been on the road and had started to get into the party lifestyle and we weren't ready to make another record. We needed a break, but were kind of forced into the studio where we just ended up layering more and more sh*t. By the time we did what became known as 'The Manor Sessions' – or 'Peace' – we knew something was wrong. 'Love Removal Machine' was probably the closest to what we wanted, but there were 11 tracks that weren't right. We took 'Love Removal Machine' and I went into a studio with a guy called Bill Price to try to tighten up the mix, but it still wasn't right. We pursued that album and spent hundreds of thousands of pounds recording it in the finest place... and I knew it wasn't right. We were going down a wormhole. We'd had ►

Photo: IconicPix/Tony Mottram

UNCOVERED

The Cult 1985 vintage: L-R: Jamie Stewart (bass), Les Warner (drums), Ian Astbury (vocals), Billy Duffy (guitar)

three top 30 singles by this point, the band's on the up and up, there's a sell-out tour of Britain. Everything's right. So why isn't *this* right? I think Ian and I both felt it, but Ian had started separating himself off from the band, he wasn't present. It wasn't great."

"WE SUPPORTED BILLY IDOL AND THEN GUNS N' ROSES OPENED FOR US. SO FIRST I'M LOOKING AT STEVE STEVENS – AND HE CAN PLAY A BIT. AND THEN I SEE A BLOKE WITH CURLY HAIR AND A TOP HAT – AND HE CAN PLAY A BIT. SUDDENLY I'M THINKING, 'I'D BETTER BUCK MY IDEAS UP, BECAUSE HAVING A GOOD HAIRDO REALLY ISN'T GOING TO CUT IT ANYMORE.'"

SO HOW DID YOU CRAWL OUT OF THE WORMHOLE?

"We came to a compromise. Chris Sheppard was a DJ and producer who was a big noise in Toronto and we started hanging with him. He played us some New York music, like 'Cookie Puss' by the Beastie Boys. Y'know, AC/DC riffs with hip-hop backing, and we both thought there was something in it. We'd just spent a year touring North America, being in an environment where people aren't defined by what they hate. We were seen as ground-breaking and revolutionary. In the Pearl Jam movie the first thing they're trying to do is get into a Cult gig. We were embraced by the fans in England, but we'd been slaughtered and obliterated by the press. It created a certain negativity with us because it wasn't objective. It was an assassination. But the more we got that negative press the more records we sold and the more fans would come to see us. So we decided we had to get away from Britain. We met Rick Rubin in New York and quickly found we liked the same things he did. He'd say, 'Do you like early AC/DC and early Aerosmith?' Well yes, I'd seen AC/DC with Bon Scott back in '76. 'Well you like rock then, so we can make a record together.' The plan was that Rick would remix the whole album, but he insisted on cutting one song from scratch. The deal was no Gretsch guitars and no Roland amps. We're tourists in New York, remember, with rented gear to do one song. Rick said to us, 'Out of all these songs you've recorded, which tune do you dislike the most?' We said, "Peace Dog'. It's overlong, turgid and horrible.' 'Well we'll start with that then.' So we're in this room, very sweaty and intense. There's a Les Paul and a Marshall and that's all I've got. I've got none of the tricks that, by the way, have just helped deliver our most successful album ever. If I hadn't been drinking so heavily it would have been a very traumatic experience. But we also got lucky working with some great people.

We had Andy Wallace, who went on to great things with loads of big production gigs. And while Rick Rubin's not technical, he is a visionary. Between them they brought an American commercial rock sensibility to the band. Listen to 'Peace Dog'. It had that pseudo Joan Jett 'I Love Rock'n'Roll' thing going on that I would never have done. It was three minutes long, punch you in the gut, no bullsh*t. Rick said, 'We'll do it all again right here and it will be a rock'n'roll record.' So that's what we did. We told our label Beggars Banquet that we hadn't recorded one song – we'd re-recorded the whole album."

AND HOW DID THAT GO DOWN?

"Well the record company and the management flew over for a big pow wow. But that's the beauty of [label owner] Martin Mills and Beggars Banquet, and not some corporate entity. He heard it and went, 'Oh I get it.' It was his gamble, but at the end of the day it was our money. And we ended up keeping Beggars afloat through the late '80s because we were the only rock act they had and rock was huge."

WERE YOU WORRIED ABOUT HOW THE BAND'S FANS WOULD REACT TO THIS NEW, PARED-DOWN, ROCKED-UP VERSION OF THE CULT?

"Well I knew we'd lose loads of fans, but I felt we had to lead rather than be led. If you let what you think your fan base want from you lead the creative process then you're dead. I had doubts, but I knew we'd spent six months in the British countryside making an album and then mixing it in London, and it hadn't worked. We re-cut the whole thing in 20 days and I'll be honest, there are bits of the old album that I prefer even now. But it's only bits. For the greater good of The Cult I knuckled down to that minimalist Rick Rubin thing. And Ian was really into it and he hadn't been all that thrilled working on 'Peace'. He was completely engaged in the process with Rick and that was a big positive. Out of necessity we made a deal with the devil. The Marshall stacks, the clothes and the Harleys were all natural. We didn't want to be new age psychedelic gypsies, thank you very much. We knew we'd made it, but 'How do we sustain it?' was the question. We didn't have another option. There wasn't another way. We put 'Electric' out and it worked. We lost a lot of fans, but we gained far more."

SO WHAT EXACTLY DID 'ELECTRIC' DO FOR THE CULT?

"Well it completely changed the game in America. 'Love' was an indie college radio album bought by hipsters and Anglo-centric fans. 'Electric' started getting talked about in *Rolling Stone* by Sammy Hagar and Robert Plant. They were checking it out because they could hear themselves in it. If you're really looking to have a long career then you've just got to go and 'conquer America' and that's what we set about doing."

DID YOU FEEL AN AFFINITY WITH THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SUDDENLY GETTING TURNED ON TO THE CULT?

"I don't think 'affinity' is the right word. On a band level we preferred Zeppelin to Van Halen, but that was OK. On a personal level there was an element of panic, because I knew I didn't have the skills to be Eddie Van Halen or Steve Vai. We had a gold album with 'Electric' and were a hot band. We supported Billy Idol and were very valuable on that bill. And then Guns N' Roses opened for us. So first I'm looking at Steve Stevens – and he can play a bit. And then I see a bloke with curly hair and a top hat – and he can play a bit. Suddenly I'm thinking, 'I'd better buck my ideas up, because having a good hairdo really isn't going to cut it anymore.' I looked at the Gretsch and decided it was holding me back. It sounded great on 'Sanctuary'. But it wasn't working on the 'Electric' stuff. I needed a Les Paul. I had to man up."

SO DID YOU MAN UP?

"I think I did. Between 'Electric' in '87 and 'Sonic Temple' in '89 I went and got guitar lessons. A friend of a friend was a guitar teacher and I said to him, 'Show me some sh*t I don't know.' He was a very competent guitar player and that was what happened. Prior to 'Sonic ►

Photos: IconicPix/George Bodnar Archive; Getty Images/Lynn Goldsmith/Corbis/VCG

Temple' I knew what we needed to do. We needed to get technically better. Jamie Stewart worked his bollocks off on his bass playing and his keyboards. And there was a falling out with our drummer Les Warner. He seemed to be more interested in the 'Why can't I write some songs and where's the money?' thing. Les wasn't focusing on getting better as a musician. He was more interested in the cash prizes. I liked hanging out with Les, so there was nothing personal. But from a business point of view I came to the conclusion that he wasn't making the right kind of steps forward as a player."

AND YOUR AMBITIONS WERE SKY HIGH AT THIS POINT, WERE THEY?

"I was definitely being careerist. I was determined to have a platinum album. 'Electric' went gold, which was great. But I was thinking why wasn't it platinum? Other bands that weren't as good as us were getting platinum albums. And this is where Bob Rock came in as a producer..."

SO HOW DID YOU FIND BOB?

"I'd befriended a guitar tech from Vancouver, a guy called Laird Doyle. Laird was my Vancouver drinking buddy. He said I should come and meet his boss, that he was great, that he'd been doing some engineering and that he loved 'Electric'. So I had a day off in Vancouver in 1987 and went to a gig Bob Rock was playing with his band Rock And Hyde. I met Bob and jammed with the band and found that we got along. He said he was engineering with Bruce Fairbairn – this was just at the time when Little Mountain Studios was starting to become a thing. They were churning out hits for Bon Jovi and Aerosmith and Loverboy. Bob told me he'd just produced this band called Kingdom Come. So I took a listen to the album. I didn't like it personally, because it was such a Zeppelin pastiche, very derivative. But I was able to look beyond that, to listen to the sounds and the production values. I felt that Bob would be perfect for The Cult. It wasn't rocket science, but in Bob's work I could hear the drum and guitar sounds I wanted for the next Cult record, I could see that it would work with the way the band was evolving."

YOU'D HAD A GOOD, SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE WITH RICK RUBIN ON 'ELECTRIC', THOUGH...

"Yes, but I didn't want to do 'Electric' again. I liked what Bob had to say. He said that 'Electric' had some great qualities, but that we'd left something behind on 'Love'. He understood why, but Bob said he wanted a mix of what we'd done on both of the two previous albums. He was looking to mix the textures and the mysticism of 'Love' with the more straight-ahead rock of 'Electric'. That was his goal for what became 'Sonic Temple'. It made sense to me. I felt it in my gut with Bob, and Ian supported it. It's one of the strengths of my relationship with Ian. If one of us feels really passionately about something, then the other will tend to go with it. And generally it's worked. So we rolled the dice on Bob."

DID YOU LOOK AT ANYONE ELSE AS A POTENTIAL PRODUCER?

"I don't think we did. In 1988 I was very focused on Bob and only Bob. It was big of Ian to go along with it, because it was a total gamble. A lot of people said we should use Rick Rubin again, because 'Electric' had been successful. But I thought 'Electric' had underachieved because it hadn't gone platinum. It was between gold and platinum, which is a detail [in fact the album did eventually make platinum status in 1997]. But it's relevant because it meant we hadn't cracked middle America. That's our story. We got the donut, but never got the middle. Having been through the Midwest with Billy Idol we wanted to reach as big an audience as possible. We wanted to get away from that hangover of being tied to what punk would *allow* us to do."

WHY DID YOU FEEL SO STRONGLY THAT BOB WAS THE RIGHT MAN AT THE RIGHT TIME?

"I wanted the band to be headlining arenas. I didn't want to miss out on that. In retrospect it seems a little bit childish, but that's how it was. I was a working class guy and more is more, and if you're not going forwards then you're going backwards. Bob had never had a platinum record at that point. And I thought we had the songs that could deliver it. We had 'Edie' and we had 'Fire Woman'. 'Edie' in particular, I really thought was a winner."

YOU USED ERIC SINGER TO PLAY DRUMS ON A FIRST SET OF DEMOS FOR 'SONIC TEMPLE'. HOW DID YOU FIND HIM?

"Bob was very adamant about doing full demos. He wanted everything squared away before we got to

recording proper at Little Mountain in Vancouver. I think our connection with Eric came through a singer called Ray Gillen, who was in a group called Badlands with Eric. Ray had provided backing vocals, the '*talkin' bout love*' bit, on 'Love Removal Machine' from 'Electric'. Both Badlands and The Cult were rehearsing in LA at a place called Mates in 1988, which was a bit 'rock'n'roll central' at the time. I'd just relocated and Ian was flitting between LA and Toronto. We spent most of that year writing, we didn't gig a lot. So we had the material and Bob was keen on refining it. Eric was really easy to get along with, so it seemed obvious to use him."

BUT THEN YOU DID ANOTHER EXTENSIVE SET OF DEMOS WITH A GUY CALLED CHRIS TAYLOR ON DRUMS...

"That was Bob's decision. He felt that Eric's style wasn't right for the album he wanted to make. Eric's a great drummer, but he's a hard rock drummer. Bob felt he wanted more of a swing feel drummer. Chris Taylor was the drummer in Bob's band, and I think Bob felt more comfortable being able to demand what he wanted of Chris. Plus Eric was doing us a favour, really, because he had his own band. Eric was never going to be in The Cult. So we did some more demos with Chris, again in LA if I remember right."

Vocalist Ian Astbury rocks an idiosyncratic look onstage on the 'Love' tour

"WE DON'T WANT TO DRESS, LOOK OR BEHAVE LIKE WE DID 30 YEARS AGO. THAT'S WHERE IT BECOMES SOMEWHAT TRAGIC. THERE ARE LOADS OF THOSE CARTOON ROCK BANDS WHO DO THAT IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE AFTER. BUT ALL THE SAME, WE'RE HAPPY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAST AND THE TRADITIONS, BECAUSE GOOD IS GOOD."

BUT THEN YET ANOTHER DRUMMER, MICKEY CURRY, ENDED UP PLAYING DRUMS ON THE ALBUM RECORDINGS...

"Bob was very keen on Mickey, who was a serious session guy after doing work with Hall & Oates and Bryan Adams. Bob felt Mickey was a special talent and that his fusion-style playing would be exactly right for us. The idea appealed to me as well, because I liked what Mark Brzezicki had done on the 'Love' album, that Simon Phillips school of technical British drumming married to our simplistic rock. I thought that was a great mix, and that if we were going to marry the two styles of 'Love' and 'Electric' then we needed someone who had the technical chops, but also the feel and the rock. Chris Taylor ended up working as assistant engineer on 'Sonic Temple' as it turned out."

AND ONCE 'SONIC TEMPLE' WAS DONE, DID YOU FEEL THAT YOU'D MADE THE ALBUM THAT WOULD TAKE YOU TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

"We thought we'd written and recorded great songs and we were full of confidence. We were getting talked up in a big way at the time. We were signing big deals and people were saying we were the next big rock thing. We were mindful that we wanted it to be commercial. After the disappointment of 'Electric', of recording it once with Steve Brown and getting it wrong, and then having to go and do it all again in a bit of a panic with Rick Rubin in 20 days, 'Sonic Temple' felt a lot more controlled. There was still uncertainty, though. We took a chance with Bob, because at that stage he hadn't produced the mega-albums he did later."

'SONIC TEMPLE' MADE THE TOP 10 IN AMERICA, SO THE PLAN WORKED, DIDN'T IT?

"Initially it went out the door gangbusters on the 'Fire Woman' single and then it flatlined to be honest. Thirty years later the disappointment has somewhat abated, but the album went platinum just as we went on tour with Metallica, then we put 'Edie' out as a single, and that was supposed to take us to a whole new world, to get us a mainstream rock audience. But it never happened."

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT WAS?

"To make it in America back then you had your big rock song first and you promoted that by supporting bigger bands. Then you went with the ballady thing and you went back round again yourselves. There was a methodology for making it that was tried and tested. But we tried it with 'Fire Woman' and 'Edie', and although it was pretty successful it didn't quite click. 'Edie' wasn't the big ballad hit that other groups were having. Everyone was happy, but there were bands I considered to be utter shite selling three times as many as us in America and 'Edie' was a better song than anything they had. So why was that? Then I began to dissect ►

Photo: Julia Goode

UNCOVERED

The three Cult band members who recorded 1989's platinum 'Sonic Temple' album. L-R: Billy Duffy, Ian Astbury, Jamie Stewart

it and decided the subject matter for 'Edie' might be a little hard for people in the Midwest to digest. A song about a girl dying young, Edie Sedgwick. When you start hearing lyrics like '*Your innocence dripped blood sweet child*' you start to understand. Unless you're contextualising that in an Alice Cooper cartoon gothic way for Americans to digest, it's not going to fly.

"We had people protesting against our band name, too, you know? There's that religious element in the States that you just forget about when you're in the UK. There were certain associations that went with the name for people in the Bible Belt, and none of them were good. That was the beginning of my understanding that there might be something in the DNA of The Cult that just isn't compatible with that mega-arena band thing. At the time I do remember thinking, 'Uh oh, it's slightly gone off the rails.' The thing was, our manager at the time, Howard Kaufman, was also looking after Lenny Kravitz, Poison and Whitesnake. I was made aware of certain compromises that were being made for major mainstream success. People were taking all the guitars out of singles like Whitesnake's 'Here I Go Again'. Those were compromises that we weren't prepared to make. But that was fine and I still stand by that decision today."

> "BOB ROCK HAD NEVER HAD A PLATINUM RECORD AT THAT POINT. AND I THOUGHT WE HAD THE SONGS THAT COULD DELIVER IT. WE HAD 'EDIE' AND WE HAD 'FIRE WOMAN'. 'EDIE' IN PARTICULAR, I THOUGHT WAS A WINNER."

YOU REALLY DID SLOG IT PROMOTING 'SONIC TEMPLE' LIVE, DIDN'T YOU?

"The album came out in the spring of '89 and there were only two big arena tours going out at the time. One of them was Ozzy Osbourne and we thought that was just too metal. The other one was Metallica, which we thought would be a better fit because they were young and edgy. On that tour we played a lot of remote American places in arenas that we've never been back to, the Nebraskas and the Dakotas of this world. It was a tough tour going out in front of Metallica fans. Some people embraced us and some people didn't. And this wasn't the touchy-feely Bob Rock 'Black' album, 'Enter Sandman' Metallica. This is 'One', a video that saved an album that wasn't great. We were friends with Metallica. Still are. But it would have been better to be out with someone else. I think that tour ground us down. It damaged us a bit because we had to fight so hard to win over their audience. We toured again afterwards and it was good, we got to be big. But I think it all took its toll on Ian."

IN WHAT WAY?

"My personal opinion is that Ian was uncomfortable with the success. It was success, but not the way he wanted it. It was a very long tour and we worked hard and Ian just didn't seem happy doing it. It was weirding me out, and I think what he got wasn't what he thought it would be. As much as he liked the idea of Zeppelin and rock and being big, when he actually got into the reality of US touring he didn't like it. It is soulless. You

have to re-educate yourself and work out a way to get around it. He also had some personal stuff going on too, which didn't help. But I have to be careful that I don't dwell on the negative. I raised the bar and tried to compete. People thought we had the ability to get to that very top level and it didn't quite work out like that. But 'Sonic Temple' was still our best-selling record."

HOW DO YOU LOOK BACK ON 'SONIC TEMPLE' NOW?

"The sounds are good and the songs are good. I tend to agree with Ian that it was possibly a little over-produced, but really that's trying to find something to complain about. We threw the kitchen sink at it and a couple of the songs at the end were a bit cheesy. But that album had a very solid eight songs that would have made a classic '70s vinyl album; four tracks a side of big, fat grooves, all heavy and dark and full of all the good things that rock can be."

Billy back in 1989. "I was definitely being careerist"

OF COURSE YOU'RE NOW OUT PLAYING SHOWS AS A CELEBRATION OF 30 YEARS OF 'SONIC TEMPLE', WITH A MAJOR RE-ISSUE OF THE ALBUM FEATURING DEMOS AND A LIVE PERFORMANCE FROM WEMBLEY FROM THAT TOUR. ARE YOU HAPPY TO BE REVISITING THE PAST IN THIS WAY?

"I'm good about it. I'm comfortable about letting all that stuff out, because really it's for the fans at this point. There's not much to be precious about now. The music almost becomes the property of the audience and the fans. We just serve it up. We don't feel that we own it. We've let out about 95 per cent of everything we have from that period. I think there are a couple of things where Ian is scat singing that he felt were just plain stupid and that he didn't want to put out. And I get that. But overall we wanted people to see the process.

"I did listen to some of it as the package was being put together, but I couldn't listen to all of it. And I was pretty familiar with it all anyway."

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE WEMBLEY PERFORMANCE WHEN YOU LISTEN TO IT NOW?

"I thought it was good, actually. I've kind of used that as the model for how we're performing the songs now. Selfishly I love being able to walk on stage and be one guitar player from one era, rather than playing a number of different styles from a 35-year career span. As a player I find it very comfortable to stick in one particular mode and I look forward to it. It feels good to me. I think the audience enjoys this kind of thing too, because they know what's coming. A regular gig has its moments, but there are always ups and downs depending on what music you select from what era."

DO YOU EVER WORRY ABOUT BECOMING A PASTICHE OF YOURSELF?

"No, because we do try to be forward-looking. We've done new artwork for the 'Sonic Temple' reissue and we always try to keep things on the front foot. We don't want to dress, look or behave like we did 30 years ago. That's where it becomes somewhat tragic. We haven't got the same hairdos as before, but we're not ashamed of the past. There are loads of those cartoon rock bands who do that kind of thing if that's what you're after. But all the same, we're happy to acknowledge the past and the traditions, because good is good. It doesn't matter what era it's from, and we're happy to celebrate with the fans. I'm not kidding myself. All bands have a golden songwriting window where they write their best material. But we're still inspired to make music, music that's good and of its time, and that's enough for me. The Cult isn't a stadium band with legendary status like the Stones. For us to have done that we would have needed 20 'Sonic Temples' and 20 'Fire Womans'. But I'm perfectly happy with where we are."

Photos: IconicPix/Ray Palmer Archive; Getty Images/Jeff Kravitz/FilmMagic Inc

Ted Nugent doing his thing in front of 60,000 people at Giants Stadium, The Meadowlands, East Rutherford, New Jersey, August 1978

TED NUGENT 'DOUBLE LIVE GONZO!'

DATELINE: JANUARY 1978

TED NUGENT HAD ALREADY PAID PLENTY OF DUES BEFORE REVVING UP A SOLO CAREER BACK IN 1975. THREE YEARS LATER HE SMASHED EVERYONE IN THE FACE WITH 'DOUBLE LIVE GONZO!' AND WATCHED IT GO TRIPLE PLATINUM. BUT DOES IT STILL MAKE EARS BLEED TODAY?

TED NUGENT
'Double Live Gonzo!' (Epic)
Released: January 1978

LINE UP
TED NUGENT – guitar, vocals
DEREK ST. HOLMES – guitar, vocals
ROB GRANGE – bass
CLIFF DAVIES – drums

PRODUCED BY
Lew Futterman and Tom Werman

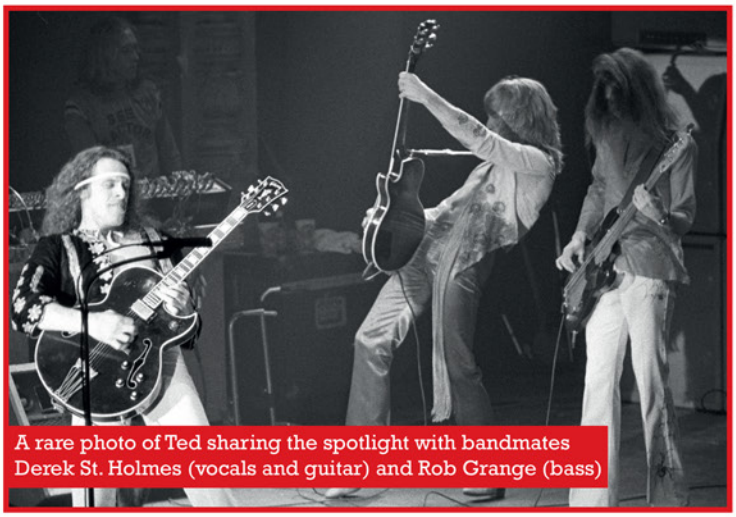
RECORDED AT
Some of the largest arena venues in North America including the Municipal Auditorium, Nashville; the Seattle Center Coliseum; the San Antonio Convention Center; the Springfield Civic Center, Massachusetts; the Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio; the Taylor County Coliseum, Abilene; and the Municipal Auditorium, Dallas.

TRACK LISTING
Just What The Doctor Ordered (Ted Nugent)
Yank Me, Crank Me (Ted Nugent)
Gonzo (Ted Nugent)
Baby, Please Don't Go (Big Joe Williams)
Great White Buffalo (Ted Nugent)
Hibernation (Ted Nugent)
Stormtroopin' (Ted Nugent)
Stranglehold (Ted Nugent)
Wang Dang Sweet Poontang (Ted Nugent)
Cat Scratch Fever (Ted Nugent)
Motor City Madhouse (Ted Nugent)

TED NUGENT ON 'DOUBLE LIVE GONZO!': "The only overdub on the entire LP was my re-doing the bass on 'Baby, Please Don't Go' due to technical distortions on the original track. Then I screamed a few new vocal yelps too. That's it. Truly a moment in time. Killer band."

STEP BACK FROM THE cartoon version of Ted Nugent that's emerged in the wake of his recent political grandstanding and what you'll see is one of hard rock's all-time greatest guitarists and performers. In his prime there's no doubt that Theodore Anthony Nugent was a veritable Molotov cocktail of technical wizardry, allied to what he himself characterised as the greatest rock show on earth. From his earliest days Nugent was a man for the big spectacle, setting up 'guitar battles' with fellow axemen including Frank Marino and Iron Butterfly's Mike Pinera to produce a guitar-centric interpretation of those old Wild West gun fights. Ever the showman, Nugent would crank his guitar to breaking point and call up notes so penetrative that they would 'smash' strategically positioned gold fish bowls on stage!

Dressed in nothing but a loin cloth, Ted loved to make a dramatic entrance, swinging in from the side of the stage on a rope like Tarzan. Nugent soon created a powerful image as the master of hard rock disaster, and it was an image that propelled him from being a psychedelic curiosity as leader of '60s space cowboys The Amboy Dukes to becoming a stadium-straddling monster.



A rare photo of Ted sharing the spotlight with bandmates Derek St. Holmes (vocals and guitar) and Rob Grange (bass)

1975'S 'TED Nugent' solo debut, 1976's 'Free-For-All' and 1977's 'Cat Scratch Fever' all made the *Billboard* Top 30 on the back of live shows that were notorious for Ted's overblown guitar soloing that was very fast and *very, very* loud. Fittingly, then, his greatest artistic statement is without doubt this 1978 'Double Live Gonzo!' release, because it preserves Ted Nugent's 1970s live attitude in all its gory glory. Want to understand what it was all about? Well, just before he launches into 'Wang Dang Sweet Poontang' Ted explains things perfectly. "Anyone who wants to get mellow can turn around and get the f*ck out of here."

'DOUBLE LIVE Gonzo!' kicks off with 'Just What The Doctor Ordered'. Guided, as are the majority of the tracks here, by vocalist Derek St. Holmes, it's a riff-hungry rocker that puts its cards on the table face up – loud, lewd and unrelenting. The Nuge next wades through a couple of raw rockers – 'Yank Me, Crank Me' and 'Gonzo' – before embarking on what, for him, is a surprisingly subtle version of 'Baby, Please Don't Go', the R&B classic popularised by Van Morrison's Them. The song that follows, 'Great White Buffalo', also shows a more thoughtful side to Nugent. It's still hard and fast, but it includes musical sections that nod back to The Nuge's post-psychedelic period. Lyrically, too, there's something more sensitive going on as Ted laments the demise of the US's buffalo population. Moving on, the immensely long 'Hibernation' starts with Ted boasting that his guitar "is guaranteed to blow the balls off a charging rhino at 60 paces," then treks off into an old instrumental from his Amboy Dukes period, which turns out to be quite at odds with the more effusive, pile-driving Nugent style. The tune wrapped up side two of the album's original vinyl incarnation, with just six songs interpreted by the halfway point.

INCREDIBLY, SIDES three and four, as they were, contain just five numbers. But they deliver maximum impact. Ted leaps straight into 'Stormtroopin'', before moving on to his live *pièce de résistance*, 'Stranglehold'. This is certainly his greatest work, because it makes full use of a clever arrangement, blazing atmospherics and the narrowest of operating margins so that it almost, but never quite, misses a beat. Scooting through 'Wang Dang Sweet Poontang' and 'Cat Scratch Fever', with their lewd double entendres, the final curtain falls with an express train interpretation of 'Motor City Madhouse'. You can't help but wish you were there at the Municipal Auditorium in Dallas, witnessing Nugent in the flesh, eyes-a-popping and biceps-a-bulging.

TED NUGENT'S GREATEST ARTISTIC STATEMENT IS WITHOUT DOUBT THIS 1978 'DOUBLE LIVE GONZO!' RELEASE, BECAUSE IT PRESERVES HIS 1970S LIVE ATTITUDE IN ALL ITS GORY GLORY.

TED WOULD continue to plough this fertile style furrow for a good few years, but eventually Wild Man Nugent would run out of steam. By the late '80s he was running aground, producing weak material and turning into a caricature of himself. The 'Double Live Gonzo!' backing band of St. Holmes, bassist Rob Grange and drummer Cliff Davies was jettisoned for a succession of faceless replacements, and it was only when Nugent returned to the fray at the turn of the '90s with the supergroup Damn Yankees that he found his mojo again – though the music was way less raucous.

NOBODY CAN deny that 'Double Live Gonzo!' is Ted Nugent's defining musical moment, a perfect encapsulation of the kind of 1970s enormodome rock that will sadly never be witnessed in such spectacular form again.

DEREK OLIVER

THE ORIGINAL REVIEWS

"In all fairness, this music is the best heavy metal in a long time, and given the genre's generally mildewed state, things aren't likely to improve in the foreseeable future. I know I'll return to 'Double Live Gonzo!'"
– Charles M. Young, *Rolling Stone*, March 1978

"The madman's band is the greatest gonzoid heavy metal outfit to be found anywhere – but anywhere – on the whole of our beleaguered planet."
– Geoff Barton, *Sounds*, 23 March 1978

Photo: Getty Images/Ron Pownall; Getty Images/Kirk West

'DOUBLE LIVE GONZO!' FACT: Out of the 19 photographs gracing the sleeve of the album, guess how many are of Ted Nugent and how many are of the band? You got it. There are 19 photos of Ted, zero images of the band.

STRIKTLY FOR KONNOISSEURS

MONSTER ROCK ALBUMS FOR THOSE WHO NEED TO GO DEEPER

AXE – 'Axe'

(CURB RECORDS)

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1979

LINE UP
BOBBY BARTH – GUITAR, VOCALS
EDGAR RILEY JR. – KEYBOARDS, VOCALS
MICHAEL OSBORNE – GUITAR, VOCALS
MICHAEL TURPIN – BASS, VOCALS
TEDDY MUELLER – DRUMS

BACK IN 1979 STYX ruled North America. Their 'Cornerstone' album had just yielded the massive number one single 'Babe', and in time-honoured fashion record labels were looking for acts that mimicked the top-selling sounds of the day. The likes of New England, Aviary and Morningstar were signed as companies looked for groups that could ride on the coat tails of Styx's success.

ANOTHER OUTFIT that fit the bill was Axe. Group members vocalist Edgar Riley Jr., guitarist Bobby Barth, bassist Mike Turpin and drummer Bob Miles had previously recorded under the name of Babyface. After releasing one album in 1977 to moderate acclaim, the band split in '78. Barth, Riley and Turpin soon re-emerged as Alien with the addition of guitarist Michael Osborne and drummer Teddy Mueller, Barth taking on the majority of lead vocals and Riley Jr. playing keyboards as well as singing. After an 18-month gestation period, holed up in Gainesville, Florida writing and rehearsing, the band signed a deal with Curb Records, a subsidiary of MCA. The success of the 1979 film *Alien* led to the band changing its name to Axe to avoid any confusion.

While Barth was at first reticent about signing with MCA/Curb, the label was persistent and signed Axe to a five-year, five-album deal. Produced by Michael Lloyd, the band's debut album hit the stores in August '79 and Axe played their inaugural show at Gainesville's Great Southern Music Hall that same month.

THE STRIKING artwork for the 'Axe' album depicted a futuristic hatchet out in space, smashing through glass. When you flipped the cover you could enjoy the sight of all five band members staring at an obelisk of white light.

It was an undeniably pompous image, but it perfectly echoed the album's music. 'Axe' provided a delicious blend of North American rock and British prog colliding head on. Album opener 'Life's Just An Illusion' sets the band's stall out right from the off as crunching guitars, soaring harmonies and tantalising keyboards deliver a memorable first punch. The jaunty keys of 'Hang On' garnered Axe some airplay as the band toured with the Little River Band. But it is 'Sympathize' that showcases the band at their most pompous.

The ballad 'Forever' may have echoed Styx's 'Babe' during the intro, but for me, Edgar Riley Jr's synthesizer and piano work make it a better song. 'Back On The Streets' favours the hard rock approach Axe would adopt on future recordings, but 'You're Out Of Line' and 'Battles' up the pomp quota. The latter is arguably Axe's signature song, an epic of sprawling synths married to a gentle acoustic guitar line. The tune steadily builds to a truly climactic ending and can stake a decent claim to be one of the finest pomp tracks ever.

AXE WOULD go on to release a further three albums before a car accident took the life of Michael Osborne and seriously injured Bobby Barth, resulting in a band split in 1984. Axe reformed several times over the years, and a last album, 'Final Offering', has just been released. But this first Axe album will always be my favourite.

Rob Evans

HUMBLE PIE – 'Humble Pie'

(A&M)

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1970

LINE UP
STEVE MARRIOTT – GUITAR, KEYBOARDS, VOCALS
PETER FRAMPTON – GUITAR, KEYBOARDS, VOCALS
GREG RIDLEY – BASS, GUITAR, VOCALS
JERRY SHIRLEY – DRUMS, GUITAR, VOCALS

IF YOU LOVE YOUR rock hard then I think it's fair to say that, for you, the day music first crawled out of the primordial swamp was 11 May 1966, when Decca Records released the Small Faces' eponymous debut album. Led Zeppelin's entire DNA can be found buried in a three and a half minute blast of energy titled 'You Need Loving' on this album, right down to vocalist Steve Marriott screaming the line '*Woman, you need love!*' that Zeppelin vocalist Robert Plant would quickly purloin. To give Plant his due, he's never shied away from acknowledging the debt that he owes to Marriott, the greatest hard rock singer the UK has ever produced. Sadly, though, the Small Faces would subsequently be drawn into a more mod-ish psychedelic direction, eventually resulting in Marriott's departure.

THE SINGER formed Humble Pie in 1969 with the intention of ploughing a rootsier, heavier furrow. The band's Immediate Records debut that same year, 'As Safe As Yesterday Is', was an artistic success. Commercially it didn't fare too well, but in terms of raw, mutant blues the album was only rivalled by Led Zeppelin's debut from the previous year. An insipid and rushed second album, 'Town And Country', also appeared in 1969, killing any momentum the band had gained in its tracks.

NO MATTER. Humble Pie brushed themselves down, hopped over to a new label, A&M, and promptly recorded their eponymous masterpiece. Even in 1970, arguably the finest year ever for heavy blues rock, 'Humble Pie' stands tall, proving that Led Zeppelin were not alone as purveyors of meaty, epic, blues-based rock. 'Live With Me', Willie Dixon's 'I'm Ready' and 'Red Light Mama, Red Hot!' are all prime beef, sledgehammer hard blues rock, while the even harder 'One Eyed Trouser Snake Rumba' is full-blooded, prototype heavy metal.

YET JUST like their rivals Zeppelin, Humble Pie weren't all about bluster and roar. On 'Humble Pie' steel guitar master BJ Cole guests on the beautiful 'Only A Roach', while guitarist Peter Frampton gives a little hint as to the direction his solo career would take with the shimmering 'Earth And Water Song'. Meanwhile, Marriott's country-flecked lament 'Theme From Skint – See You Later Liquidator' is a wry look at the bankruptcy woes of the band's previous label Immediate.

WHILE MARRIOTT'S vocals are acknowledged as never less than astounding, his guitar work is often under-appreciated for providing the necessary backbone to Peter Frampton's searing lead. Drummer Jerry Shirley and former Spooky Tooth bassist Greg Ridley, meanwhile, are never less than rock solid in their support of these shining lights.

'HUMBLE PIE' is gut-wrenching rock that is nonetheless full of engaging contrasts. Its thrilling peaks and heartbreaking, mellifluous interludes combine to produce a set of songs that no self-respecting lover of classic rock should be without.

Giles Hamilton

Photos: Getty Images/GAB Archive/Redferns

ROCK CANDY REISSUES

THE VERY LATEST HOT RE-RELEASES FROM THE LABEL

OZZ – 'No Prisoners'

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1980

LINE UP
ALEXIS T. ANGEL – vocals
GREGG PARKER – guitar

BACKGROUND
When it comes to tough, no-nonsense rock, you'd have to look long and hard to find an album better than OZZ's 'No Prisoners'. Stuffed with top riffs, killer songs and impressive vocals, it certainly registered with the hard rock cognoscenti, despite a lack of sales that made this album a relative obscurity. Even now 'No Prisoners' gets nods and familiar knowing smiles from those who've heard it.

OZZ was started by two hugely talented individuals, Chicago-born guitarist Gregg Parker and vocalist Alexis T. Angel, who was raised in Minnesota. Parker had established a reputation backing a number of known musicians and leading a band by the name of The Infernal Blues Machine. The group released an obscure, soulful rock album on the London label in 1976. Yet despite his connections and musical ability, it wasn't until Parker met Angel a few years later that sparks really began to fly. The two formed OZZ as a vehicle to harness the rampant energy of Led Zeppelin and Aerosmith. By throwing in the raw but highly charged sounds of Montrose, KISS and Ted Nugent as well, OZZ produced a sound that nudged at the emerging modernisation of guitar-driven rock, without straying from its roots. The album sleeve, although gaudy and non-conformist, was an attempt to present a multi-racial image that hard rock had yet to fully embrace. Sadly, most people presumed this was an R&B or pop record when they saw it in the racks. This couldn't have been be further from the truth, with Parker's vicious riffing and Angel's Robert Plant-like voice laying down the law in a frenzied, yet powerfully precise manner.

WHAT *ROCK CANDY MAG* WRITER DAVE REYNOLDS SAYS
"It's worth noting that 'No Prisoners' [released on Epic Records and distributed by CBS] was released in the same year, 1980, that Ozzy Osbourne returned to the fray with his new band, Blizzard of Ozz. Although there has never been any suggestion that the appearance of Osbourne's new solo band [signed to Jet Records and also distributed by CBS] had anything to do with the failure of 'No Prisoners' to take off on its own crazy train, it is an enticing conspiracy theory all the same."

TRACKS TO CHECK OUT
This is a tremendous collection of red-hot hard rock, leaning heavily on the Plant/Page and Tyler/Perry call and response axis. Songs such as 'Sail On', 'Hungry Love' and 'Givin' Up On Love' lead the way, but there isn't a weak track on this record, which is a major achievement in itself.

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK
The Rock Candy CD is fully remastered, contains a 12-page colour booklet, enhanced artwork, quotes from the band and a 3,500 word essay by *Rock Candy Mag*'s Dave Reynolds.

THE WORD FROM RC BOSS DEREK OLIVER
"Produced by studio wizard Andy Johns, who also worked with Led Zeppelin and Free, the OZZ album knocks the stuffing out of the competition. Musical support comes from a number of guests – some unknown, some more famous – including bassist Craig Gruber, who'd worked with Rainbow and Gary Moore. It appears, though, that the main duo were responsible for piecing together this glorious tapestry of advanced mayhem. Why the album failed to attract commercial recognition at the time remains a major mystery. Gregg Parker moved to the UK later in the '80s and released a follow-up album of studio outtakes and live tracks under the moniker OZZ II, titled 'Exploited'. It was later reissued as 'The Assassin', but Parker's collaboration with Angel was long since over. These days he can be found back in his native Chicago, having founded the Chicago Blues Museum."

SHY – 'Excess All Areas'

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1987

LINE UP
TONY MILLS – vocals
STEVE HARRIS – guitar
PAT MCKENNA – keyboards
ROY STEPHEN DAVIS – bass
ALAN KELLY – drums

BACKGROUND
The mid-'80s was an exciting time for British rock. With the sound and style of the NWOBHM fully explored, fresh-faced newcomers were looking at other influences, most notably US acts such as Journey, Survivor, RATT and White Lion. UK groups like FM, Virginia Wolf, Lionheart and Strangeways began blazing a new trail of melodic, yet surgically executed hard rock that started to gain a foothold. Shy operated in this area and were tipped to enjoy huge success by appealing to both pop-rock and traditional hard rock fans. With this, their third album, the band refined their sound and looked to square up to the challenge ahead.

Evidence of a sharper focus could be seen when Shy selected world-renowned British producer Neil Kernon to oversee 'Excess All Areas'. Kernon already had an impressive track record with bands such as Dokken, Kansas and Queensrÿche. Inspired by collaborating with Kernon, Shy worked hard writing top-notch material, collaborating with the likes of Don Dokken and Duane Hitchings. The result was a masterful album that caused heads to turn and plaudits to flow.

Shy's record company at the time, RCA, believed the band could succeed not only in Europe, but also in the lucrative North American market. A massive promotional campaign was launched to grab a piece of the action. The Birmingham band now had the sound, the look and the hunger to take their music to the top. With the emphasis on songs with highly melodic hooks, it seemed – for a short while at least – that

Shy could do no wrong, and a heavy touring schedule helped to bolster their following.

WHAT BASSIST ROY STEPHEN DAVIS SAYS
"All of the band wanted Neil Kernon. We were starting to find our feet in the studio, and now understood a lot better what it took to produce an album. We liked what Neil had done when producing Autograph's 'Sign In Please' album [1984], and also his work on the eponymous Aviator record [1986]. And Tony [Mills] was a big fan of the Queensrÿche album 'Rage For Order' [1986]. I should add that for RCA at the time, money was no object when it came to us. If we'd been able to secure the services of one of the super big name producers like, say, 'Mutt' Lange, then they'd have certainly paid for them. But we were all very pleased to get Neil."

TRACKS TO CHECK OUT
The album boasts several standout songs, including the likes of 'Emergency', 'Young Hearts', 'Break Down The Walls' (a co-write with Don Dokken) and the plaintive ballad 'When The Love Is Over'. While Shy's sound is infused with massive harmonies, precision musicianship and superb arrangements, the central driving force is undoubtedly Tony Mills' extraordinary lead vocals – one of the most striking voices on the scene.

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK
The Rock Candy CD is fully remastered with four bonus tracks, contains a 16-page colour booklet, enhanced artwork, new interviews with the band and a 3,500 word essay by *Rock Candy Mag*'s Malcolm Dome.

THE WORD FROM RC BOSS DEREK OLIVER
"'Excess All Areas' proved that British rock bands could compete musically with top-scoring American groups. For a few precious moments it looked as though Shy would go the distance, but sadly it wasn't to be. Problems the band faced included their record company losing faith and a failure to tour the States. Nonetheless, 'Excess All Areas' is a perfect slice of '80s melodic hard rock and remains a benchmark for a style that still sounds fresh and relevant today."

Buy these albums and tons of other great releases at www.rockcandyrecords.com

ROCK CANDY PICKS

THE STUFF THAT'S GRABBED OUR ATTENTION

SLADE 'Feel The Noize: The Singlez Box!'

(BMG)

WHAT'S THE STORY?
This seven-inch vinyl box set features 10 rare, internationally released Slade singles from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Belgium, all housed in reproductions of their original sleeves. The A-sides include five UK number ones, three number twos and the Top 3 single 'Everyday', which all give us a sharp reminder of just how big the boys from Wolverhampton were in their '70s heyday. The B-sides, meanwhile, give a fascinating insight into a different, often-forgotten, harder-rocking side of Slade that was always a large part of the band's make-up.

WHAT FRONTMAN NODDY HOLDER SAYS
"*Top Of The Pops* was the [UK] TV music show at the time and we were like the house band for about five years. It was a big deal and we knew that if people were talking about us the next day in the pub then we'd done OK. We'd have one song going down the charts just as the next one was coming up."

ANY EXTRAS?
Not as such, but there is a vinyl seven-inch of a 1980 track, 'Night Starvation', backed with 'When I'm Dancing I Ain't Fighting', that hasn't been previously commercially released in this format, so I guess that counts.

HIGHLIGHTS
Well there's no arguing against the ear-worm qualities of so many of the band's mega-hits such as 'Mama Weer All Crazee Now', 'Cum On Feel The Noize' and 'Coz I Luv You', even if bassist and violin player Jim Lea dismissed the latter as "a pile of sh*t". If these songs aren't already part of your musical DNA, then you really need to acquaint yourself with them pronto. For those who are already familiar with the smash hits it's the B-sides that are going to be a real eye-opener: for the most part they are resolutely uncommercial and tougher-sounding. The likes of 'Wonderin' Y' and 'Man Who Speeks Evil' will open your ears to a whole new world of Slade.

Howard Johnson

FULL CREAM Nettie Baker and Tony Palmer

(WYMER PUBLISHING)

WHAT'S THE STORY?
Nettie Baker, eldest daughter of Cream's drummer Ginger, provides the insights for this limited-edition coffee table book. Just 1,000 have been printed, and each comes in a block-foil case, with four prints: individual images of Baker, Jack Bruce and Eric Clapton, plus a group shot. It is only 128 pages, but then Cream's career was one of boom and bust, three ground-breaking, world-dominating years before their dissolution in 1968, and then a reformation in 2005 for shows in London and New York. The death of Jack Bruce means those shows at the Royal Albert Hall and Madison Square Garden will remain the band's swan song..

WHAT AUTHOR NETTIE BAKER SAYS
"Sadly no matter how likely or otherwise it was that the three would reunite on stage again, Jack's death on 25 October 2014 drew a line in the sand as far as Cream is concerned. For those who saw Cream in the '60s or in 2005, and for anyone who enjoys the music and has the records, the memories and the enjoyment will continue unabated. Hopefully you will also find this book a worthy souvenir of the world's first, and arguably best supergroup."

BEST BITS
The pictures are wonderful. The years 1966-68 were a time of change at bewildering speed and that's reflected here. Cream coined the term 'supergroup', and they had all bases covered: they were all virtuoso musicians with impeccable pedigrees in jazz and blues. But even better than the pics are the little pieces of ephemera: Ginger Baker's hand-written sci-fi short story, a pencil drawing Clapton made in 1967, and the bios the band filled out for fan club members: Clapton lists his favourite author as JRR Tolkien and California as his ideal holiday destination. It's the small details that count...

DOES IT HIT THE SPOT?
At almost £60 for 128 pages it's an investment that only hardcore Cream fans may be willing to make, but they will be rewarded with a book that feels intimate and genuine. *Full Cream* perhaps understandably leans toward Baker, but the unique combination of talent and personalities that made the band is apparent within the pages..

Jon Hotten

Photos: Barry Plummer/Courtesy of Slade; Getty Images/Jeff Kravitz/Film Magic Inc

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS 'Purple Super Deluxe Edition' (RHINO)

WHAT'S THE STORY?
When Stone Temple Pilots emerged out of San Diego in 1992 they copped a whole load of flak for being Pearl Jam lite, a bunch of chancers riding on the coat tails of grunge. Their debut album, 'Core', did have something of the copycat about it, but that didn't stop it going eight times platinum in the States. Second album 'Purple', released in 1994, proved the naysayers wrong, showing a band that could accumulate influences and produce something far more unique and compelling. It also helped that singer Scott Weiland stopped trying to ape Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder.

WHAT BASSIST ROBERT DELEO SAYS
"It came together. We created a great record, a great listening experience from front to back. We just set up like we were live. There's leakage and all. We tracked that record in 11 days and in two weeks we were done. There was an immediacy about that record that was cool looking back on it."

ANY EXTRAS?
This three-CD, one-LP set is a veritable treasure trove for the STP obsessive. There are fully 29 extras tracks here to accompany the remastered 11 songs on the original album, including demos of album tunes and curios, and a live concert. The 17-song live recording from New Haven in August '94 suggests the Pilots were a force to be reckoned with on stage, capable of roaring when they felt like it, but also showing the requisite amount of introspective sensitivity that marked much of the grunge movement's reaction to the party-hard hair-metal attitude of the previous decade.

HIGHLIGHTS
Stone Temple Pilots' music has worn remarkably well. It certainly doesn't sound as 'of its time' as many of the '80s metal bands now do. 'Purple' was a coming-of-age album, recorded by a band demonstrating that the critics were simply wrong. There are still traces of Pearl Jam in STP's DNA. But a song like 'Pretty Penny' showed the band was equally familiar with the Led Zep back catalogue. There's also an enjoyable, flamenco-tinged live version of Bowie's 'Andy Warhol' to appreciate, a funky version of Zeppelin's 'Dancing Days' and an enjoyably jazzy rendition of 'Christmas Time Is Here', originally written for a TV special for the cartoon character Charlie Brown. This is an album of varied, but invariably high quality material.

Howard Johnson

STEVE HACKETT 'Genesis Revisited Band And Orchestra: Live At The Royal Festival Hall' (INSIDE OUT MUSIC)

WHAT'S THE STORY?
In October 2018, in the impressive Royal Festival Hall in London, guitarist Steve Hackett achieved a lifetime's ambition by performing the music of Genesis – the band he walked out on some 41 years earlier – with an orchestra. He complemented the performance with a cross-section of solo material. Some selections in the latter category are lifted from his 25th and latest solo studio album, 'At The Edge Of Light', though 'Shadow Of The Hierophant' dates all the way back to his first album, 'Voyage Of The Acolyte', back in 1975.

WHAT STEVE HACKETT SAYS
"What a fantastic experience for the band and myself to play alongside an orchestra and to feel the power of the sound created by this extraordinary combo. I'm proud to release this exciting product."

ANY EXTRAS?
The Blu-Ray digipak features the filmed live performance and a 'behind the scenes' documentary, as well as promotional videos for three of the latest album's tracks, 'Under The Eye Of The Sun', 'Beasts In Our Time' and 'Peace'. But mostly this is all about placing Hackett's ever-reliable guitar picking in a whole new context and discovering whether it stands or falls. It's very much the former!

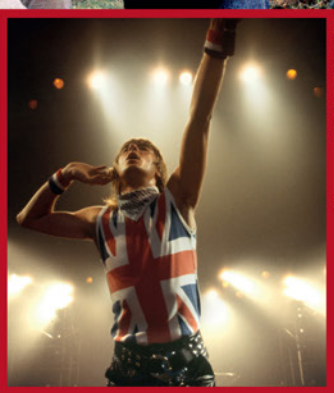
HIGHLIGHTS
"As you can see we've got a far bigger band than usual," deadpans Hackett before introducing the 41-piece Heart Of England Orchestra. Steve and his truly first-rate backing ensemble – fronted by the gifted Nad Sylvan – have performed most of these Genesis greats over a succession of recent solo tours. Their treatment here, though, rings the changes. Unexpectedly, 'Dance On A Volcano' sounds more genteel than ever before, while a sweeping 'Firth Of Fifth' takes on newly bombastic tones, though it still highlights that iconic lead guitar solo. Perhaps inevitably, though, it's 'Supper's Ready', the 23-minute marathon first heard on Genesis's 1972 album 'Foxtrot', that really steals the show.

Dave Ling

THE INSIDE TRACK

MOTT THE HOOPLE

Mott The Hoople posing for the cover of their 1971 album 'Wildlife' in North Yorkshire. L-R: Ian Hunter (lead vocals and guitar), Pete 'Overend' Watts (bass), Mick Ralphs (lead guitar), Dale 'Buffin' Griffin (drums), Verden Allen (organ)



DEF LEPPARD FRONTMAN **JOE ELLIOTT** HAS AN ENDURING LOVE FOR OLD SCHOOL BRITISH ROCKERS **MOTT THE HOOPLE**. HE'S HAPPY TO SHARE HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THIS UNDERRATED BAND WITH YOU, OUR *ROCK CANDY MAG* READERS…

"I FIRST HEARD MOTT The Hoople on the pirate station Radio Luxembourg. I would've been about 11 or 12 years old, and the radio station had this thing called 'Record Of The Week', where one single got played every hour each day for a week. At the time they'd chosen the Mott The Hoople song 'Downtown', a number co-written by Neil Young and originally recorded by Crazy Horse. I took a shine to the band's sound as soon as I heard it and their name stuck in my mind, because it was cool – unlike the boring names chosen by other bands like The Tremeloes.

"In 1971 I heard another Mott song, 'Original Mixed-Up Kid' on an Island Records compilation album called 'El Pea' and that tune really made its mark on me, so I tried to find out more about the band. By that time Mott had already released three albums and were about to put out a fourth, 'Brain Capers'. In those days you could go down to a second-hand shop and get all the albums released by pretty much anyone – and that's what I did. I fell in love with those records, because they sounded different to anyone else at the time. Yes, Mott was a rock band like Deep Purple or Led Zeppelin, but they were a lot earthier in their approach. To my mind, Mott The Hoople were lo-fi compared to Purple and the other big bands of the era, and that worked for me.

"THE BAND played my home town of Sheffield in 1972, '73 and '74, but I never went to see them. I'm not sure why. I did see T. Rex at the City Hall in Sheffield in '71, but then somehow got out of the habit of going to shows. I was still very much into music, but followed football and tennis, and so I missed Mott three times in the 1970s!

"The first time I actually got to see them perform was when they reformed in 2009. I saw the band at their two warm-up dates in Monmouth and then at all five shows in London at the Hammersmith Odeon. I do know that the venue has a different name now [Eventium Apollo], but it will always be the Odeon to me! I also saw every Mott date on their 2013 tour.

"THE BAND were kind enough to ask me to guest with them at each date in London in 2009. When [frontman] Ian Hunter first asked, I assumed they wanted me to introduce the band onstage. So I was pleasantly surprised when he explained that they wanted me to sing 'All The Young Dudes' with them! That was such a thrill. Ian explained that it was the band's way of saying thank you to me for keeping the flame burning for 30 years. Every time I ever did an interview I tried to give Mott The Hoople a name check. In the '80s and '90s a lot of magazines didn't want to run anything I said about Mott, because they weren't trendy enough. If you talked about The Clash or the Sex Pistols, then that was OK. But Mott… who were they?

"I only formed my side band Down 'N' Outz because I was asked to put a band together to open for Mott at the last of those 2009 Hammersmith dates. I wanted to perform songs connected to the band, but not specifically *by* them. So I chose tracks from Ian Hunter's solo career, from [Mott offshoot band] British Lions, and also from Mott [the name the group used when Ian Hunter left in 1974]. I thought Mott The Hoople fans would love that – and it really worked. Down 'N' Outz are still going and we're just about to put out our third album ['This Is How We Roll', released 11 October].

"I KNOW Mott The Hoople isn't a household name, but the group had a huge impact on many other artists. A lot of what we do in Def Leppard is because of them. Talk to someone like Mick Jones from The Clash and I bet he'll admit that some of what he did came from Mott The Hoople. I'll always do anything I can to further their reputation and cause. Why? Because I feel it's my duty to wave the flag for one of Britain's finest ever bands – and the fact I got to know the guys so well is a bonus for me. I owe a lot to Radio Luxembourg and their DJs for introducing me to Mott The Hoople all those years ago. I love playing their records and the fact that they're still active and I can still see them live is a real thrill."

Joe Elliott interview by Malcolm Dome. Photos: Ross Halfin/Courtesy of Def Leppard; Getty Images/Brian Cooke/Redferns

THE ALL-TIME CLASSIC – 'MOTT' (1973) AND 'THE HOOPLE' (1974)

"I always used to put the 'Mott' album top of the list. When you consider that it opens with 'All The Way From Memphis' and also includes 'Whizz Kid', 'Drivin' Sister' and 'I Wish I Was Your Mother', then there's no doubt that it's brilliant. But in recent years I've become a huge fan of 'The Hoople' and I now find it very tough to choose between the two albums. The latter release also has some amazing moments like 'The Golden Age Of Rock 'N' Roll' and 'Roll Away The Stone'. How can you argue with such great songs? So I'm afraid I can't plump now, and have to pick both of them as my all-time classics. This period between 1973 and 1974 was when the band was in full cry and really developed an undeniable style. The best thing would be for someone to release a double album with all of these tracks on. They really are two historic records."

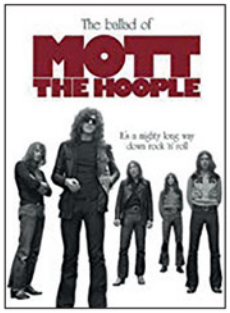
THE ONE FOR CONNOISSEURS – 'BRAIN CAPERS' (1971)

"This is a hard choice to make, but I feel 'Brain Capers' is the album that deserves this sort of attention. If you want to go for a smoother, maybe more sophisticated record, then 'Wildlife' that came out earlier the same year would be the one to check out. But 'Brain Capers' has a certain charm all of its own. It was recorded in only five days, which was ridiculous, really, and it does sound like it's all stream of consciousness writing. However, the band clearly knew what they were doing, even though the overall sound was very rough and ready. I accept that this might not be an album for everyone – and if you're thinking about introducing someone to the band, then go for 'Mott' or 'The Hoople' – but I do feel that this album should never be overlooked, as the band show both energy and musicianship here."

THE ONE TO AVOID – 'ALL THE YOUNG DUDES' (1972)

"I wouldn't say this is necessarily a terrible album, but it's certainly a disappointment. I recall [bassist] Pete Watts telling me that David Bowie, who produced this album, spent 90 per cent of the mixing time working on 'All The Young Dudes' and only 10 per cent on the rest of the album. You can tell as much when you listen to it. '...Dudes' is simply remarkable and does sound extraordinary. But all the other songs on the album sound rather tinny. This album also saw the beginning of tensions between Ian Hunter and [guitarist] Mick Ralphs. Bowie thought Ian's voice was more suited to 'All The Young Dudes', so got him to sing it instead of Mick, which created friction between the pair. You can hear a little bit of that in the grooves, I think."

BEST FILM/VIDEO – *THE BALLAD OF MOTT THE HOOPLE* (2011)



"There isn't a really great film about Mott, but I guess the closest thing we have is a documentary called *The Ballad Of Mott The Hoople*. The trouble is, it's far from definitive. Pete Watts, for instance, refused to be interviewed for it, and so it's incomplete as it stands. You will find some footage of the band online, but very little. The problem is that a band like Mott The Hoople doesn't have the profile for anyone to do a big-budget documentary and really tell the band's story properly. No high-profile company will take on the job, because it will only sell about 200 copies. And I'm not sure the band have filmed one of their gigs in the past several years to a good enough standard for it to be released. So, we're stuck with nothing much visual to represent them. For all its flaws *The Ballad Of Mott The Hoople* is all we have."

THE RARITY – 'BEHIND ENEMY LINES' (1974)

"I have loads of rare band recordings in my collection, but that's because Pete Watts gave me a load of stuff. I don't say that to boast, but rather to prove how much of a Mott collector I am. But none of that is available anywhere commercially. Of course there have been bootlegs over the years, and one that springs to mind is 'Behind Enemy Lines', which is a recording of a Santa Monica show back in 1974. I think it was put out by The Amazing Kornyfone Record Label, and it was of decent quality. So if you're looking for something genuinely rare, that would be a good place to start."

THE INSIDE TRACK

Ian Hunter rocks Birmingham Town Hall, 26 December 1970

JOE ELLIOTT'S MOTT THE HOOPLE PLAYLIST

'ALL THE YOUNG DUDES' (from 'All The Young Dudes', 1972)
"This is a superb song. It's timeless, and helped to define the 1970s for many of us. But I also have a personal reason for loving this. When I was 12 years old I used to tell my friends in the school playground about this band called Mott The Hoople, who were going to be massive – and they all laughed at me. Then 'All The Young Dudes' came out and put Mott in the charts. I could look at everyone and say, 'I told you so!' This is also the song that [top producers] 'Mutt' Lange and Roy Thomas Baker would put on in the studio to test the sound system, because it's perfection."

'MARIONETTE' (from 'The Hoople', 1974)
"This is an incredible piece of writing, and I know that Freddie Mercury used to stand at the side of the stage when Queen opened for Mott The Hoople in the early '70s and watch them do this song. I'm sure it influenced 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. It's not at all operatic, but it's very dramatic in the same way that something like 'Bat Out Of Hell' is full of power. This feels like a 12-minute epic story, all told in just five minutes."

'WHIZZ KID' (from 'Mott', 1973)
"The song starts off with a straight-ahead guitar, but there's also a lot of interesting piano playing. There's no chorus as such, but there is a bridge, which has an unusual style and sticks in the ear. There's a real air of authority about 'Whizz Kid' that reminds me of 'Virginia Plain' or 'The Strand' by Roxy Music. It's an oddity in terms of structure, but the band make it work so well that it becomes readily acceptable even to fans of obvious melodies."

'THE JOURNEY' (from 'Brain Capers', 1971)
"This is just over nine minutes in length and really is an epic. Yet for all of that 'The Journey' is quite simple in terms of construction. There's nothing spectacularly clever about the track, but lyrically it takes you on a journey that keeps you enthralled. It proves that Mott can keep your attention during a long song without ever compromising their approach."

'ROLL AWAY THE STONE' (from 'The Hoople', 1974)
"This is a genius pop song. It crosses over to pop fans without ever alienating Mott's rock followers and that's a clever thing to be able to pull off. The lyrics are intelligent without being stand-offish, and the chorus is wonderful. When you listen to this you can hear where some of what Def Leppard have done comes from. It's the sort of thing we've aspired to achieve on more than one occasion."

THREE TRACKS TO AVOID

'SOFT GROUND' (from 'All The Young Dudes', 1972)
"This was written by [Mott organist] Verden Allen and I have to say that in general I don't much like his songs. It's almost as if the band recorded his material simply to keep the peace, rather than because they were strong enough to be included. This is typical of what I mean. It does the band no favours at all and shouldn't have been included on the album. Allen was capable of writing the occasional decent tune, but unfortunately 'Soft Ground' isn't one of them."

'THREADS OF IRON' (from 'Mad Shadows', 1970)
"Another example of a wasted opportunity. This was written by Mick Ralphs and is far from his finest moment. It's a little dark and doesn't suit the band at all. I wouldn't say it's awful, because that's unfair. But it's far below the standard I expect of Mott. This could have been left off 'Mad Shadows' without anyone complaining. But it's there and we all have to accept it."

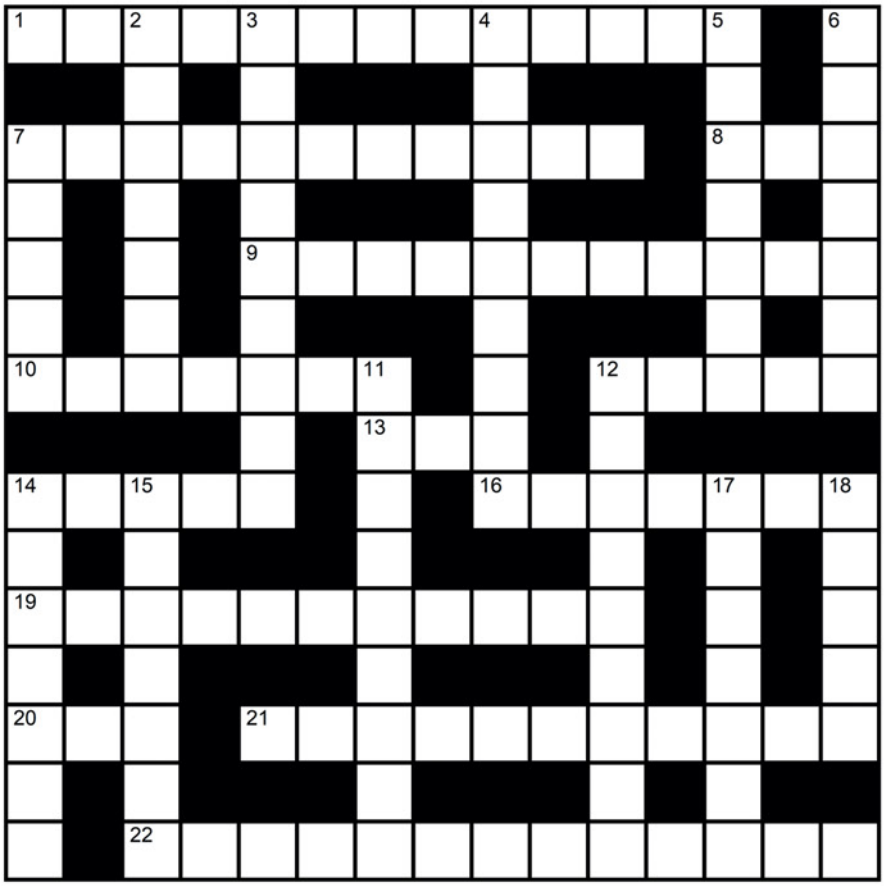
'NO WHEELS TO RIDE' (from 'Mad Shadows', 1970)
"This is not one of Ian Hunter's finest hours, because the song is rather mediocre. I would never dismiss it as being pure rubbish, and I'm the sort of person who will put on 'Mad Shadows' and play it from start to finish. But I'm still not a fan of this tune. When you play the song in the context of the overall flow of the album it's not that bad. But it's definitely not one of the reasons why I admire Mott The Hoople."

Mott in 1973. Glam has, we think, arrived on the scene. L-R: Morgan Fisher (keyboards), Ian Hunter (lead vocals and guitar), Ariel Bender (lead guitar), Dale Griffin (drums), Mick Bolton (touring organist), Pete Watts (bass)

Photos: Getty Images/Brian Cooke/Redferns; Ross Halfin/Courtesy of Def Leppard; Getty Images/George Wilkes/Hulton Archive

CROSSWORD

It's time to show off your encyclopedic knowledge of rock. It's time for the *Rock Candy* crossword...



The *Rock Candy* crossword is compiled by former *Kerrang!* writer **Jason Arnopp**, whose book *From The Front Lines Of Rock* gathers the highlights from his career in journalism. Featuring vintage interviews with the likes of Iron Maiden, Metallica, Kiss, Guns N' Roses, Bon Jovi and Queensrÿche, it's out on Kindle via Amazon sites worldwide or can be bought direct from Arnopp in several formats, via **payhip.com/Arnopp.**

2 DOWN: SLADE

ACROSS

1 Moving track from the Georgia Satellites' eponymous 1986 debut with a metal connotation. (8,5)
7 The Kings X mainman. (4,7)
8 Led Zeppelin get thirsty on '--- For One'. (3)
9 The loud'n'proud original Van Halen singer. (4,3,4)
10 Lyrics from Uriah Heep's 'Tears In My Eyes': "*It's the same ugly story of a woman ------- a man/So I have to forget you though I'm not even sure if I can.*" (7)
12 Saxon had a '----- Ball Of Rock' back in 1991. (5)
13 Demon declared that 1985 was the 'Heart Of --- Time'. (3)
14 Status Quo gave a warning on 1972's 'Piledriver' album. 'Don't ----- My Time'. (5)
16 The surname of Def Leppard's inimitable frontman. (7)
19 They all called him Nuno Badmintoncourt, but that wasn't his real name, this was. (11)
20 We just loved Aerosmith's 'Big --- Inch Record' of their favourite blues back in 1975. (3)
21 The second track from Great White's 1986 'Shot In The Dark' album. (4,2,3,2)
22 Back in 1973 Alice Cooper said to Mary Ann, "*I'm really ----- ----- ---*". (5,5,3)

For answers go to our website www.rockcandymag.com

DOWN

2 Slade had a 1971 hit with the non-album single 'Coz - ------' (1,3,3)
3 The opening track on Judas Priest's 1980 'British Steel' album. (5,4)
4 '(I Would) ----- Be ---- For You' insisted Robin Trower on his 'In The Line Of Fire' release from 1990. (5,4)
5 The opening track from UFO's 1975 'Force It' album, '--- It ----'. (3,4)
6 Little-known New York-based '80s glam band ------- Gladys had some 'Social Intercourse' in 1988. (7)
7 Billy Idol enjoyed a little 'Daytime -----' on 1983's 'Rebel Yell' album. (5)
11 'The Whole World's ---- -----', said April Wine back in 1976. (4,5)
12 'For Those About To Rock (We ------ ---)' insisted AC/DC in 1981. (6,3)
14 Max ------- once took 'A Million Vacations'. (7)
15 Many a heavy metal band has been accused of being this, often with the flimsiest of evidence. (7)
17 Lyric from Jethro Tull's 1981 song 'Crew Nights'. "*--- ---- cops line corridors wearing tour T-shirts proudly.*" (3,4)
18 Where the Scorpions proudly recorded their 1978 live album. (5)

Photo: Getty Images/Gijsbert Hanekroot/Redferns

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SHY - 'BRAVE THE STORM'

SHY - 'EXCESS ALL AREAS'

IF ONLY - 'NO BED OF ROSES'

EUROPE
'THE FINAL COUNTDOWN'

OZZ - 'NO PRISONERS'

AVIATOR - 'S/T'

GODDO - 'S/T'

GODDO - 'WHO CARES'

GODDO - 'AN ACT OF GODDO'

BATON ROUGE
'SHAKE YOUR SOUL'

STEVE JONES - 'MERCY'

STEVE JONES
'FIRE AND GASOLINE'

THE SCREAM - 'LET IT SCREAM'

RIOT - 'RESTLESS BREED'

ORPHAN - 'LONELY AT NIGHT'

NIGHT - 'S/T'

NIGHT - 'LONG DISTANCE'

SAMMY HAGAR - 'DANGER ZONE'

EUROPE - 'OUT OF THIS WORLD'

MAX WEBSTER
'A MILLION VACATIONS'

STILLWATER - 'S/T'

STILLWATER
'I RESERVE THE RIGHT'

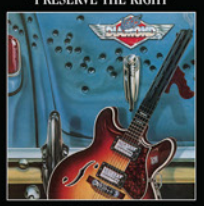
BROWNSVILLE - 'AIR SPECIAL'

SHADOW KING - 'S/T'

Y&T - 'EARTHSHAKER'

Y&T - 'BLACK TIGER'

Y&T - 'MEAN STREAK'


LEGS DIAMOND - 'S/T'

LEGS DIAMOND
'A DIAMOND IS A HARD ROCK'

LEGS DIAMOND - 'FIRE POWER'

COMING SOON

EASTWAY - 'TRICK OR TREAT'

KEEL - 'THE FINAL FRONTIER'

KEEL - 'S/T'

ORPHAN - 'SALUTE'

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